THIRTY-FIFTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

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THE DICKENSIAN

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FOR DICKENS LOVERS

CONTENTS

THE IMMORTAL MEMORY OF DICKENS
By H. A. Vachell

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SOUL DRAMA
By Mary L. Pendered

* * *

THE DICKENS AMATEUR DRAMATIC COMPANY

* * *

LAMB AND DICKENS

* * *

THE BATH CONFERENCE

* * *

AND OTHER ARTICLES

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ILLUSTRATED

EDITED BY WALTER DEXTER

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6. David Copperfield arrives at Dover. 2 Men, 3 Women, and 3 Boys.
7. Mrs. Jarley's Waxworks. 2 Men, 2 Women, and 10 Living Figures.
8. The Flight of Em'ly. 3 Men and 2 Women.
9. A Night Adventure (Old Curiosity Shop). 7 Men and 3 Women.
10. The Death of Quilp. 4 Men and 2 Women.
11. Two Scenes from A Tale of Two Cities. (The Jackal) (The Fellow of no Delicacy). 2 Men and 1 Woman.
12. Scenes from Edwin Drood (Rosa seeks her Guardian) (Mrs. Billickin of Bloomsbury Square). 2 Men and 3 Women.
13. David Copperfield's Dinner Party. 4 Men and 2 Women.
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15. Dingley Dell. A Christmas Entertainment.
16. Bob Sawyer entertains Company. 5 Men and 2 Women.

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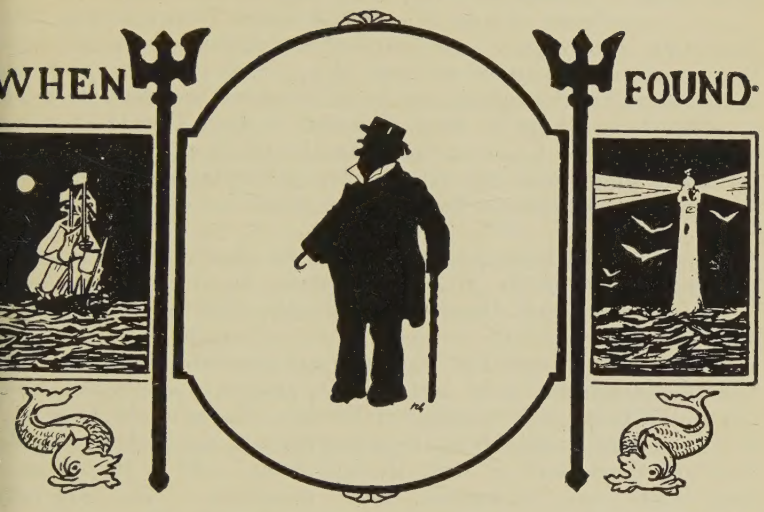

rawn by] [*Ruth Whittaker*

entenaries. For the next thirty-one years we shall be having recurrent centenaries in connection with Dickens's Life nd Works. It will be quite out of the question to celebrate all of them ; re have already had most successful celebrations of two centenaries ; he birth in 1912 and the publication of the first part of *The Pickwick Papers* in 1936. There remain only two more possible celebrations, he centenary of the epoch-making visit to America which occurs in bout two years' time, and the centenary of Dickens's death in 1970. his latter anniversary we must leave for others and we write with the ertain conviction that 9th June, 1970 will not pass by unhonoured and nsung. What concerns us most at the present moment is the proper ay of celebrating the centenary of Dickens's visit to America in 1842. here is only one fit and proper way !

* * * * *

merica 842-1892. Dickens left England for America in January, 1842 by the first Cunard Liner, and we should accordingly arrange a Centenary American Journey by one of the test liners of that company—whose own centenary is to be celebrated 1940. We should leave England in the late spring of 1942 and visit, nong other places, New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Toronto, and ontreal. The journey could be accomplished in from three to four eeks. It is not too early to think about making arrangements now order to secure the best accommodation, and to make preparations r our reception in the American cities. Any reader of *The Dickensian* ho would like to take part in this proposed great and historic trip ould get in touch with the Hon. Secretary of the Fellowship.

Better Late Than Never. The Dickens Seat in the National Theatre is now an accomplished fact; the final list of donations will be found on page 271. The National Theatre is long overdue. Over ninety years ago a similar movement was on foot, and Dickens wrote to an ardent advocate of it, "Such a theatre . . . would be but worthy of this nation, and would not stand low upon the list of its instructors, I have no kind of doubt. I wish I could cherish a stronger faith than I have in the probability of its establishment on a national footing within fifty years." And so another cherished ideal of Dickens—like the rational Sunday—has at last been realised.

* * * * *

Albert A. Hopkins. With the passing on the 10th June last, at the age of 69, of Mr. Albert A. Hopkins, America loses one of its greatest Dickensians. To the New York Branch he devoted his varied talents for many years, and among them he will be sadly missed. He was for over 40 years associate editor of "The Scientific American"; he was also the author of a comprehensive treatise on Locks, and co-editor of Vasari's "Lives of the Painters." To Dickensians he will always be remembered as the author, with Mr Newbury Frost Read, of the "Dickens Atlas," and as the editor of that bright and informative little periodical, "The American Dickensian." To the widow who survives him we offer our deepest sympathy.

* * * * *

Walworth Sentiment. Dickens knew Walworth well, and Walworth knows and loves his works. The recent alterations in the century-and-a-half old "Temple Bar" public house in the Walworth Road would have rejoiced the heart of Dickens; they have converted the old-time "pub" with its many private drinking compartments, into a comfortable hostelry, where man, and woman too, can take their ease in ample and most pleasurable surroundings. The spacious lounge is filled with roomy basket chairs and graceful tables, the counters groan with delectable dishes to appease the appetite, and upon the walls are a series of oil paintings of Dickens characters by Mr. Leveson T. Johnson, after the original studies of Fred Barnard. Frequenters love the paintings and greet the characters as old friends, so Mr. George Robins told us the other day when we called to inspect the renovated inn which has been in his family's possession for more than fifty years. Mr. Robins is justly proud of his hostelry and his pictures and we congratulate him on both.

* * * * *

Mr. Pecksniff's Village. Over thirty-four years ago, in the very first volume of this magazine, the identity of certain alleged originals of Mr. Pecksniff's village and of the "Blue Dragon" were discussed, and we thought, settled—at least as far as such things can ever be regarded as settled. On an excursion to Stonehenge and Salisbury, arranged for the Bath Conference in May last, the party stopped at the "Green Dragon" at Alderbury, and were told that it was the original of the "Blue Dragon" Inn, presided over

by Mrs. Lupin, that being the nearest approach to a village near Salisbury with a Dragon sign and having the additional attraction of a house of mixed style about a mile away, built by the architect Pugin, which Dickens might have had in mind as the home of Mr. Pecksniff. We must, however, protest that there is no justification for such a choice. Alderbury, on the Salisbury-Southampton road, does not fit any of the many descriptions of the situation of Mr. Pecksniff's village. If we are to indulge in the pleasurable pastime of finding an original for every place mentioned in Dickens's fiction, then we must look for this famous village " a couple of miles or so " (Ch. 20) from the London-Salisbury road, before we reach that city, because in chapter 36, when Tom Pinch left Salisbury by the coach for London, the driver stopped at " the old finger post " at the top of the lane leading to the village, to pick up Tom's trunk and the basket of provisions thoughtfully provided by Mrs. Lupin.

If we have a desire to find a village for Mr. Pecksniff then, as Robert Albutt pointed out in these pages in 1905 (and endorsed some years later by the present writer in " The England of Dickens "), then the village of Winterslow fits the picture; but it has no Dragon, only a Lion's Head.

* * * * *

Salisbury. We are inclined to believe that Dickens knew very little about Salisbury before he wrote *Martin Chuzzlewit*. Being on the main road between London and Exeter, he had passed through it more than once on his reporting journeys to and from the West, and later to the cottage at Alphington, which he took for his father and mother. These passing glimpses were all that were necessary for him, and that is why we find no detailed descriptions of the city and its neighbourhood. It was not until some years after the book had been written that he stayed in Salisbury during a short visit with Forster, Leech, and Lemon, when, as Forster tells us " having obtained horses from Salisbury," they rode over " every part of the Plain, visiting Stonehenge and exploring Hazlitt's Hut at Winterslow, birthplace of some of his finest essays." The party stayed at the White Hart Hotel in Salisbury, from which Dickens wrote to his wife on 26th March, 1848.

* * * * *

Col. and Mrs. Gadd. Our heartiest congratulations to Lt.-Col. W. Laurence Gadd and Mrs. Gadd, who celebrated their Golden Wedding in June last. May they have many more happy and healthful years before them. Col. Gadd was unanimously elected Vice-Chairman of the Council of the Dickens Fellowship at the July meeting.

* * * * *

Contemporary Quotation. Mr. H. Saxe Wyndham sends me a very early reference to *Nicholas Nickleby*, which he has found in " The Musical World " for 2nd August, 1838, when the story was only about half-way through its monthly publication. It is given in a quotation from the " Morning Post," and is as follows: " The Count Groegswig, the Baron Koeldwithout and the other foreign

noblemen attached to Count Strogonoff, left town yesterday morning on a visit to the Duke and Duchess of Richmond at Goodwood ! "

* * * * *

Copyright. Mr. Gunn Gwennett has suggested that the copyright law should be amended, so that after the expiry of the fifty years after the author's death at present protected, the royalties should be paid to some national fund for the benefit of the Arts. It has been estimated that during a recent period of eighteen months, a fund of this kind would have benefited to the extent of £70,000 from the sale of Dickens's works alone.

* * * * *

That Devil Grip. Dickens's Raven " Grip " has been playing us " the very devil." Can anybody tell us his present whereabouts ? We know that after his sudden expiry in 184- he was stuffed by Dickens and placed inside a rustically decorated glass case, which, at the sale of Dickens's effects in 1870, was sold to Alderman Nottage for 120 guineas. After the death of Lady Nottage in 1917, it was again sold at auction and fetched only 78 guineas. The late Mr. Charles J. Sawyer became the owner and the raven was on exhibition in his Oxford Street window for some time. Unfortunately, Mr. Sawyer junior is not now able to trace the person to whom the bird was sold and we are most anxious to discover Grip's present owner. *The Dickensian* for 1917, page 232, contains a very full account of Grip and his successor (buried in the garden of 1, Devonshire Terrace), with a photograph of the original Grip. It is fortunate to have this record since on two occasions the trustees of the Dickens House have been presented with a stuffed raven, said to be Grip, and in each case have had to decline the gift. May the third time prove lucky.

* * * * *

Lord Bateman. The beautifully produced American quarterly, " The Colophon " included in the first number of its " New Graphic Series " (March, 1939), *The Loving Ballad of Lord Bateman*, with all the original illustrations by Cruikshank. This is the first reproduction of the verses and notes since the publication in *The Dickensian* last year (Spring Number) of the letters of Dickens to Cruikshank, which settle once and for all the authorship of the note to the last verse of the song, and the responsibility for many alterations in the other verses.

The republication of this anonymous work of Dickens of just a century ago is accompanied by some excellent notes by Mrs. Anne Lyon Haight, who has carried her investigations through all the former claims of authorship, and reproduces three of Thackeray's illustrations to the ballad, the originals of which are now in the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.

The article is probably the very last word on the subject and the proprietors of " The Colophon," and Mrs. Haight are to be congratulated on the thoroughness with which they have presented this valuable record, in which, we may add, due acknowledgment is given to Count de Suzannet and *The Dickensian*.

Ourselves. We are pleased to report that the Nottingham Branch has joined the ranks of those branches which include in their subscription a copy of *The Dickensian* to each member. This means at least one hundred copies to that branch. Now, who's next ? Come on, Southend, Montreal, Cheltenham, Toronto ; each of you have a membership of several hundreds.

* * * * *

The Dickens Tradition. I have to thank several readers for their letters pointing out my slip in referring to Winifred Holtby's book, " South Riding," as West Riding, and am glad to correct the error. Several readers have enquired why I did not include " The Good Companions " and " Our Mr. Dormer " in my list. I did not do so because I wished to confine the list to fiction of the last two or three years. Miss Pendered recommends " National and Provincial," by Lettice Cooper ; " it has all the Dickens fidelity to life, vivid pictures, sympathy, understanding, and humour," she adds.

* * * * *

Chatham. " The House on the Brook "—18 St. Mary's Place, Chatham—is doomed. The Dickens family lived here from 1819 until the end of 1822 when a move was made to London. It has great association with Dickens's boyhood, and although there has been a little clamour against its demolition, it was found to be structurally unsafe and not suitable for preservation. The one and only place on which all eyes are set for future preservation is of course Gad's Hill Place !

* * * * *

London. If certain proposals for street-widening are adopted, No. 1 Devonshire Terrace may disappear in the course of the next few years. The house has undergone extensive alterations since Dickens left it more than ninety years ago. Although Dickens occupied this house for a longer period than that at 48 Doughty Street, the respective claims were well considered before the latter was purchased some years ago. The house in Doughty Street has the distinction of being in precisely the same condition as when Dickens lived there.

* * * * *

Mrs. Dickens's Golden Silence. When, five years ago, I was invited to contribute an article to the leader-page of " The Daily Mail," I applauded the golden silence of Mrs. Dickens. Her daughter, through a confidante, has now justified her in the book " Dickens and Daughter " which Mr. Ley reviews on another page. Whilst not agreeing with all that Mr. Ley has here written, I am in complete agreement with him on at least one point : it is a great pity Mrs. Perugini did not take courage in her right hand and pen the truth for posterity.

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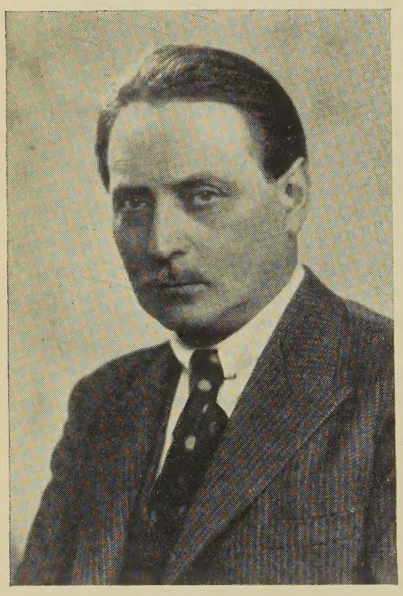
I hope you will now turn to page 262 and become a Friend of The Dickens House.

WALTER DEXTER.

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP'S NEW PRESIDENT



THERE is a special appropriateness in the acceptance of office by our new President, Mr. Montague Compton Mackenzie. First, by virtue of his distinction in English literature, and second, from the fact that his forbears had a close connection with Dickens. Mr. Compton Mackenzie is the grandson of the actor, Charles Mackenzie, who adopted for stage purposes the name of Henry Compton, and Emmeline Montague. Mrs. Compton was associated with many of Dickens's theatrical productions given at various times all over the country in aid of charity. Mr. Compton Mackenzie's high position in contemporary literature was recognised when he was elected Rector of Glasgow University in 1931 and the degree of LL.D. conferred upon him. The list of his works includes some 50 novels, volumes of verse, several plays, and works on historical subjects. Of his novels the best known is probably " Sinister Street," which has become a classic ; this is as it should be, seeing that the book is in the true Dickens tradition, combining as it does swiftly-moving narrative, accurate character drawing, and vivid topographical description. Mr. Compton Mackenzie's industry and energy are amazing, for, after leaving Oxford University with a 2nd class in modern history, he became for a few years a soldier. During the war he rejoined the forces and had a commission in the Royal Marines, serving in the Royal Naval Division in the Dardanelles Expedition, whence he was invalided (with the O.B.E.) but returned to duty and was appointed Director of Intelligence in the East Mediterranean area. Mr. Mackenzie's historical works are the result of immense and painstaking research ; " The Windsor Tapestry " contains a masterly analysis of nineteenth century history.

Having seen life from so many angles, one can gather that Mr. Mackenzie's writings, if not strictly autobiographical, are formed on his own experience and observation and we may be assured that his knowledge of human nature and his wide sympathies will make him an ideal President for such a Society as the Dickens Fellowship.

T. W. H.

GLORIOUS BATH

THE glorious city of Bath, bathed in glorious sunshine, is the ideal setting for a conference, and we shall long remember the Conference of 1939 for the sunshine, beauty, and hospitality of Bath.

The smiles with which the Mayor, Captain Adrian Hopkins, and his charming Mayoress greeted us in the historic Pump Room, on Friday, May 26th, gave the keynote to the welcome that awaited us everywhere. The many Dickens costumes also helped to add to the jollity of that evening. The entertainment provided for us was unusual, but we quickly realised that there was a real Dickens spirit lying beneath it. Miss Ethel Smith gave an exhibition of "Physical Fitness" dancing which was startling in its efficiency, but eloquent of the advance in athletic freedom by the ladies since Dickens's day. Then followed Captain Olsson's "Merry Sprites," little boys and girls who carried out a gymnastic display of which any regiment might have been proud, with evident enjoyment. Dickens would have enjoyed that display of mingled grace and glee, with their perfect confidence that Captain Harold Olsson would never fail to save them from injury, and we were not surprised to hear their trainer declare his love of Dickens.

The next morning more than three hundred members of the Fellowship assembled in the Concert Hall of the Pump Room for the Conference. Again the Mayor welcomed us, claiming that Bath enjoyed the reputation for kindness, good manners, and hospitality—to which he now added the fourth virtue, "fellowship." The Chairman, Mr. J. D. Billington, after thanking the Mayor, addressed the meeting on the importance of persistency of effort. Under his able guidance the business of the meeting was carried out expeditiously. The report of the Council was received with acclamation and its adoption was moved with eloquence by Mr. Lea Axon and seconded with becoming brevity by Mr. Cooper Sands. The Financial Statement by Mr. Hill was adopted on the proposition of Mr. H. E. Evans, seconded by Mr. Groome.

Unanimous satisfaction was expressed at the election of Mr. Compton Mackenzie as President, and of the Earl of Lytton, M. André Maurois, Mr. Norman Birkett, K.C., Mr. H. C. Dickens, His Honour Judge Howay, LL.D., F.R.S.C., and Mr. McFadden, K.C., as Vice-Presidents, Mrs. Edwards, of Vancouver, spoke on behalf of Judge Howay, and her presence, together with that of two members from Victoria (B.C.), emphasised the representative nature of the conference.

In giving a report on the Dickens House, Mr. Carden called for "Friends of the Dickens House" who would subscribe annually to the maintenance and endowment of the House. The spontaneous response showed how near the Dickens House lies to the heart of those present.

Immediately after the Conference a photograph of the three hundred members was taken from across the ancient Roman Bath. This is a wonderful setting for a group picture, and the fact that the group was too large for the picture proclaims the success of the Conference.

In the afternoon, Alderman T. Sturge Cotterell conducted many of

the members round the city. The day was hot, and many of the streets are very steep, but in spite of temporary lameness Mr. Cotterell was the most active and most untiring of the party. Sheridan and Miss Lindley, Burke, Goldsmith, Jane Austen, Mrs. Siddons, and, of course, Beau Nash, were but a few of the famous people who met us everywhere. In St. James's Square—at the house where Dickens stayed with W. S. Landor—Mrs. Giddings, President of the Bath Branch of the Fellowship, hung a memorial wreath of laurel beneath the tablet recording Dickens's association with the house. Another tribute was paid to Dickens by the guide, when he discussed whether it was the Royal Crescent or the Circus round which Dowler chased Winkle. That a scene in fiction should be so lively a portrayal of fact as to promote a topographical discussion is certainly a tribute to the imagination of a writer. Apart from this, the architecture of the Royal Crescent as well as that of the Circus, of Pulteney Street, and many other parts of Bath, are delightful to behold, and mark Bath as *the* Georgian City.

After tea in the gardens down by the river, we prepared for dinner at the historic Assembly Rooms. With our good friend Alderman Sturge Cotterell presiding, three hundred and thirty three of us were given a real feast in the room where Dickens acted and gave his readings.

Mr. HORACE ANNESLEY VACHELL proposed "THE IMMORTAL MEMORY OF CHARLES DICKENS" in the following speech which was broadcast in the Western Regional programme.

All of us here in the rooms where, more than a hundred years ago, Dickens walked and talked, know that the Dickens Fellowship, established so long after his death, is the greatest tribute to his memory that could be paid to him. He loved conviviality, but he loved charity more. Fellowship was to him not merely companionship but the never-failing, sustained effort to understand and sympathise with others, to give in fullest measure more than he received. Our Fellowship is becoming, particularly at Christmas time, a mighty Charity Organisation; it might become the mightiest in the English-speaking world.

When I had the honour of being President of the Fellowship, I had to speak much, too much, and often, too often, about Dickens. Robert Louis Stevenson affirmed that no man could talk for more than five minutes about a beauty spot without boring his listeners. This may be true of places; it is not true of persons. Some people, for instance, can talk about themselves for ever! It is perhaps the most significant testimony to the popularity of Charles Dickens that ardent Dickensians love to talk of him and the characters he created. Not long ago, a young lady told me that she couldn't read Dickens. I was stricken dumb. An answer blew into my head about a fortnight afterwards. I should have said to her: "Tell me, is that Dickens's fault—or yours?"

Quite recently, in Montreal, there was a Dickens Convention, and I was invited to answer the question: "Why do you read Dickens?" Somebody is reputed to have asked Mr. George Bernard Shaw if he was a reader. He replied: "Yes; but now I only read my own

works; and I have an ever increasing admiration for them." My reply to the Secretary of the Montreal Fellowship was: "I read Dickens because I love old friends." I went on to suggest that these old friends were known to thousands who had never read Dickens, another proof, if proof were needed, of his universality. Writers have created characters like Don Quixote, Don Juan, Sherlock Holmes, Becky Sharp, Robinson Crusoe, whose names have become part of the English language, but, with the one exception of Shakespeare, no other author has given to the general public so many outstanding names which mean something quite apart from the story which embalms them: Gamp, Micawber, Pickwick, Heep, Squeers, Pecksniff, and how many others!

All present to-night and many of those who happen to be listening-in elsewhere have formed their own opinion of Dickens. I hope it will interest you to hear what his famous contemporaries thought of him.

Here, for example, is a thumbnail sketch penned by that dour Scot, Tammas Carlyle: "He is a fine little fellow, Boz. Clear blue intelligent eyes, eyebrows that he arches amazingly, large, protrusive rather loose mouth, a face of most extreme mobility which he shuttles about: eyebrows, eyes, mouth, and all, in a very singular manner while speaking. Surmount this with a loose coil of common-coloured hair, and set it on a compact figure, very small and dressed à *la* D'Orsay. For the rest, a quiet, shrewd-looking fellow who seems to guess pretty well what he is and what others are."

This was written to Carlyle's brother in 1840.

Gavan Duffy in his "Conversations with Carlyle" cited the sage of Chelsea as saying: "Thackeray had more literary ability, but no convictions, except that a man ought to be a gentleman and ought not to be a snob. Dickens would have made a successful comic actor had he taken to that sort of life."

In view of the lamentable quarrel between Dickens and Thackeray, the wholehearted tribute paid by Thackeray to his great rival is of poignant interest:

"The *Christmas Carol* is the work of the master of all the English humorists now alive: the young man who came and took his place calmly at the head of the whole tribe and *who* has kept it. . . . . Readers will say of Charles Dickens: 'God bless him!' What a feeling is this for a writer to be able to inspire, and what a reward to reap."

Fitzgerald wrote: "I bless and rejoice in Dickens more and more."

Walter Landor, who lived in Bath, wrote to John Forster: "Tell Dickens that he has drawn from me more tears and smiles than are remaining to me for all the rest of the world, real or ideal."

George Borrow wrote to a Spanish friend: "There has appeared in England a second Fielding, a young writer who, in certain novels, has evinced such talent, humour, variety, and profound knowledge of character that he charms all readers with the capacity to understand him. The name of this phenomenon is Charles Dickens, but he is better known as 'Boz.'"

I have been reading lately a delightful autobiography by Fredk.

Locker-Lampson, entitled "My Confidences." He writes: "I sat by Dickens . . . he talked like a demon of delightfulness. He has an exhaustless vitality. . . He is an adept at brewing stiff punch, but sparing in his own libations. . . . He is still so sensitive that he told me (Lampson is writing in the year before Dickens died) that in a railway carriage if his opposite neighbour were reading one of his novels, he dared not watch him lest he should see the book thrown aside with indifference."

Edgar Allan Poe sums up the achievements of Dickens in a paragraph: "By the promptings of the truest genius, he has been brought to compose, and evidently without effort, works which have rendered him the idol of the people while defying and enchanting the critics."

I have no time to read passages from Sydney Smith, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and others.

I wish to say a little of the literary conscience of Charles Dickens. Bishop Stillingfleet, a Westcountryman, bishop of Worcester in 1689, defined conscience as a "nice and tender thing." In its common abuse to-day, I detest the adjective *nice*, so perniciously anaemic. "Rather nice" makes me see red. Stillingfleet used nice in its proper sense as discriminating and discerning, not, not fastidious, which indicates disdain, a too critical outlook and aloofness. The literary conscience of Dickens was indeed a *nice* and tender possession. Nobody questions his almost uncanny discernment and discrimination invariably tempered by tenderness. He could abhor a sin and love the sinner. I am sure that he pitied Bill Sikes and even Fagin. He showed us that such a little monster as Quilp could inspire love in his unfortunate wife.

Charles Dickens is read throughout the English-speaking world because—as a distinguished critic said of him—"He was the devoted lifelong servant of the public and the most laughter-provoking writer of his time." He might have added that a literary conscience never debased humour by presenting it as bad humour.

I venture to speak of his humour as a special grace. Certain lines have persistently stuck in my memory although to my shame I have forgotten who wrote them:

> "Her grace was that of the general air
> Which softens the sharp extreme of things
> And connects by its subtle, invisible stair
> The lowest and highest————"

Dickens stooped to conquer. He dealt for the most part with humble folk, whom he knew and loved. When he wandered into so-called high society he was not so successful. But the grace of his humour did bring together the lowest and highest, culminating in the tribute paid to his genius by Queen Victoria. I was barely nine years old when Dickens died. I found our nursery maid in tears. When I asked her what ailed her, she sobbed out: "Charles Dickens is dead." She gave me a coloured photograph of him. How many thousands shed tears when he passed away? Perhaps his supreme gift, whether it came from without or within, did soften the sharp extreme of things. The well-known

story of the dying man who asked if he could live long enough to read the next instalment of a Dickens's serial is a striking instance. Dickens took the people whom he knew and made the best of them. Some of our novelists of to-day take people whom they do not know and make the worst of them. That is not realism, although self-labelled as such. Reading certain defeatist novels, I feel sure that I am marooned in a submarine with the periscope shot away. No writer was more aware of the shadows of life than Dickens, no man or woman ever protested more vehemently against the inequalities and injustices of life, but he saw God's sunshine piercing the devil's gloom; he could bring that sunshine to a deathbed!

After the toast had been drunk in silence, Judge Kirkhouse Jenkins, K.C., proposed "The Dickens Fellowship," praising the aims of the Fellowship, their charitable work, and calling upon the Fellowship to see that the public conscience which Dickens awakened should never resume its slumber. Mr. J. D. Billington, Chairman of the Council, replied for the Fellowship.

Mr. Rust, Hon. Secretary of the Fellowship, proposed the City of Bath, to which the Mayor replied.

Mrs. Giddings proposed "Our Guests," tactfully intimating that all members of the Fellowship including the visitors to Bath, were hosts of those guests. Colonel Lennard, High Sheriff of Bristol, replied in a happy vein. In proposing "The Chairman," Mr. J. W. T. Ley told of the early days of the Dickens Fellowship and of his meeting with Alderman Cotterell over thirty years ago. To this the Chairman replied by quoting Cyrus Angelo Bantam, to the effect that no one is old in Bath.

On Sunday afternoon we attended Service in the Abbey Church, where the Archdeacon, taking the text, "He being dead, yet speaketh," expressed delight at knowing that "in these days when so much filth is issued from many publishing houses," Dickens is still one of the best sellers.

On Monday we went by motor coach—by nine motor coaches to be exact—through Bradford-on-Avon and Trowbridge, past the Westbury White Horse and over the rolling Salisbury Plain to Stonehenge. Here a short stop was made while an official guide told us what is known and what is conjectured about this wonderful "circle." Away again through Amesbury, past Old Sarum, and through Salisbury we came to the "Green Dragon" of Alderbury, which most of us were well content to take to be the "Blue Dragon" of *Martin Chuzzlewit* so long as the successor of Mrs. Lupin served us quickly. A short distance away is a quaintly designed house which may have been that of Seth Pecksniff, but the knowledge that lunch awaited us at Salisbury, two miles away, dulled the edge of topographical enquiry.

At lunch we met the Mayor and Mayoress of Salisbury and prominent officials of the city, and subsequently we were entertained at the Cathedral with an organ recital by Sir Walter Alcock and then conducted round the Cathedral by the Dean. All too soon we had to rush back to the waiting coaches and return.

That evening a dance in the Pump Room enabled us to become acquainted with yet more of the members of other branches, and Mr. Billington expressed the thanks of all to the Bath Branch, and particularly to Mr. Sturge Cotterell and to Mr. and Mrs. Giddings and their daughter for the manner in which they had worked for our enjoyment.

The following Branches were represented at the Conference: Headquarters, 66; Balham, 9; Hackney, 5; Leyton, 5; St. Pancras, 32; Bath, 21; Bedford, 1; Birmingham, 9; Blackburn, 1; Blackpool, 6; Brighton, 1; Bristol and Clifton Dickens Society, 8; Broadstairs, 1; Bromley, 13; Cheltenham, 15; Cirencester, 2; Eastbourne, 6; Edinburgh, 6; Gloucester, 2; Hatfield, 3; Hull, 6; Lancaster, 2; Liverpool, 15; Manchester, 28; Nottingham, 32; Plymouth, 7; Preston, 5; Redditch, 6; Rochester, 6; Rugby, 9; Southampton, 2; Southend, 7; Tewkesbury, 2; Wellingborough, 4; Whitstable, 1; Epsom, 1; Edmonton, 1; Hamilton, 1; Toronto, 1; Vancouver, 1; Victoria (B.C.), 3; Winnipeg, 1; New York City, 1; Sierra Madre, 1.

S. J. Rust.

EXAMINATION PAPER ON *NICHOLAS NICKLEBY*

(*Answer to Questions on page* 152)

1, The Misses Dowdle (Ch. 26); 2, Roast pork and babies (Ch. 41); 3, (*a*) Mrs. Nickleby (Ch. 37), (*b*) Tilda Price (Ch. 9), (*c*) Mantalini (Ch. 17), (*d*) Miss Knag (Ch. 17), (*e*) Mantalini (Ch. 34), (*f*) Ned Cheeryble (Ch. 35), (*g*) Mr. Gregsbury, M.P. (Ch. 16), (*h*) Newman Noggs (Ch. 52), (*i*) Mantalini (Ch. 64); 4, It saves (*a*) medicine, (*b*) illness, (*c*) food (Ch. 8); 5, Mr. Curdle (Ch. 24); 6, Mrs. Kenwigs for "Nursing a healthy babby, and reflections on Mr. Lillyvick's conduct" (Ch. 52); 7, (*a*) Mr. Mantalini's allowance £120 a year (Ch. 34), (*b*) Nicholas's salary at Cheerybles £120 a year (Ch. 35); 8, It was invented and composed by Mrs. Kenwigs (Ch. 14); 9, £2 14*s*. (Ch. 64); 10, Madeline was the daughter of Charles Cheeryble's former sweetheart (Ch. 46); 11, Fanny was 22 ("in her twenty-third year") and Tilda was 18 (Ch. 9); 12, Four abreast (Ch. 21); 13, He occupied the whole of the first floor, comprising a suite of two rooms (Ch. 14); 14, From September till April (Ch. 27); 15, With change for a sovereign in halfpence (Ch. 34); 16, Perfect whiteness (Ch. 44); 17, (*a*) Alfred, (*b*) Henry, (*c*) Ninetta, (*d*) Cecilia, (*e*) Walter, (*f*) Mortimer, (*g*) Augustus, familiarly Tommy, (*h*) Walter, (*i*) Julia, (*j*) Susan.

NICKLEBY SCENES IN NEW YORK

At the second annual costume party of the New York Branch, held on May 19th, Dr. Oliver Huckel, as a life-like Mr. Dickens, supported by Mr. Frank Harvey Field, President of the Branch (Mr. Pickwick), and Mrs. Field (Mrs. Nickleby), introduced each character.

The series of sketches from *Nicholas Nickleby* which followed, revealed considerable talent among the members, notably Miss Grace Reed, Mr. and Mrs. William Dike Reed, Dr. Edward R. Easton, Mr. Thomas Mulholland, Mr. William Bond, Miss Edith J. Turner, and Miss Jean Howlett.

UNHAPPY ENDINGS

By WILLIAM CROSBY BENNETT

DICKENS, at the age of twenty-nine, created the character of Pecksniff. I doubt if any of the older novelists of his generation could have excelled or even equalled this personification of a smooth and oily hypocrite whose downfall was quite in accordance with his previous life. The undoing of this colossal pretender was a public and demonstrative affair of a true Dickensian flavour. It is, of course, crude melodrama when old Martin strikes him to the floor, but there follows so fine a piece of satire that the act itself is somewhat toned down by it.

The fallen Pecksniff, toward whom all eyes are turned, needed no loyal, anxious mother to beg him "to be 'umble," for his humility was not of the Heep variety. Even in his downfall he retained his characteristic patronising air. He had been given plenty of rope and had promptly hanged himself, but unlike the discomfited Uriah, when his mask was torn away, Pecksniff's duplicity was found to be no mere mask. It was the very skin of his face; the very stuff of which his soul was made. Felled by old Martin's blow, he was still the imperturbable, dignified martyr, grieved but gracious under calumny, unquelled by those who had been assembled to witness his undoing.

> "I have been struck this day," he says, "with a walking stick, on that delicate and exquisite portion of the human anatomy, the brain. Several blows have been inflicted, sir, without a walking stick, upon that tenderer portion of my frame, my heart . . . Do I not know that in the silence and the solitude of night a little voice will whisper in your ear, Mr. Chuzzlewit, 'This was not well; this was not well, sir?' . . . If you find yourself approaching to the silent tomb, sir, think of me. If you should wish to have anything inscribed upon your silent tomb, sir, let it be that I, the humble individual who now has the honour of reproaching you, forgave you; that I forgave you when my injuries were fresh and when my bosom was newly wrung."

In *Our Mutual Friend*, the Veneering dinner is only a prelude to the Veneering breakfast, which celebrates the marriage of the Lammles, "two of the Veneerings' oldest friends." But, there is another time to come, and it comes in about a fortnight, and it comes to Mr. and Mrs. Lammle on the sands at Shanklin.

> "Mr. and Mrs. Lammle have walked for some time on the Shanklin sands, and one may see by their footprints that they have not walked arm-in-arm, and that they have not walked in a straight track, and that they have walked in a moody humour; for, the lady has prodded little spirting holes in the damp sand before her with her parasol, and the gentleman has trailed his stick after him. As if he were of the Mephistophiles family indeed, and had walked with a drooping tail."

One, we know, was an adventurer and a fortune-hunter, marrying,

as he supposed, a lady of wealth ; the other, also a seeker after riches, uniting with him for the same reason. When the mask was torn away it must have sent a deadly chill to the hearts of that precious pair on the Shanklin sands, but to us, as we read, it is only a cruelly humorous episode. Both were impostors, cleverly caught and bound together in the trap of matrimony.

In *Dombey and Son*, the undoing of Mr. Carker, the manager, in the very hour of his anticipated triumph, impresses one as being perhaps the most intensive bit of drama in all Dickens. The very setting is dramatic. The typical French apartment of that day, the waxed floors, the painted walls, the gilded ceilings, the golden framed mirrors, the intricate candelabras, the velvet-backed chairs, the crimson draperies, all have the semi-reality of the stage.

In the midst of these fading splendours, Carker meets Dombey's wife to plan a life of sensual ease in Sicily, only to discover he has been duped and double-crossed by the woman with whom he believed he had eloped. But, as we analyse the affair, we wonder whether Edith Dombey's action, although superbly drawn, is not after all improbable. Would a beautiful, proud woman, like Edith, lure in this way a man she loathed in order to punish her husband's pride, maintaining all the time her wifely integrity, but giving herself every appearance of having broken the Seventh Commandment ?

The unmasking of Silas Wegg, in *Our Mutual Friend*, and the fate of the Father of the Marshalsea, in *Little Dorrit*, are excellent examples of satirical extremes. One is farcical, the other tragic. But however farcical the one, there is a discordant note, after Silas's villainy has been exposed, in having him tossed into a passing scavenger's cart. It is not only childish, but displays a vulgarity that Dickens could not always avoid. There is no question that the scoundrel fully deserved it, but the satirical comedy is somewhat marred by so inelegant an act.

In the other, William Dorrit, a tragic comedian, stands before us in an unconscious self-betrayal no less impressive and startling in its way than that of the sleep-walking Lady Macbeth. Nowhere in English literature is there a picture more awful in its simple inevitability than the eloquent speech addressed to the guests at Mrs. Merdle's dinner table by the affable, patronising Father of the Marshalsea.

It is astonishing that Dickens, in *Martin Chuzzlewit*, when comparatively young in his literary career, should have created three of perhaps his most outstanding master-villains, in the persons of Seth Pecksniff, Montague Tigg, and Jonas Chuzzlewit, and then cleverly and adroitly set each to match wits with the other. Not only Tigg's method of compulsion in making Jonas invest in his fraudulent organisation, but setting him as a decoy to bring in Pecksniff, is as pretty a piece of scoundrelism as has ever been written. The picture of Jonas when Tigg whispers in his ear that he knows the secret of Anthony Chuzzlewit's supposed murder, is unforgettable.

> " From red to white, from white to red again, from red to yellow then to a cold, dull, awful, sweat-bedabbled blue—in that short

whisper all these changes fell upon the face of Jonas Chuzzlewit, and when at last he laid his hand upon the whisperer's mouth, appalled lest any syllable of what he said should reach the ears of the third person present, it was as bloodless and as heavy as the hand of death.

"He drew his chair away, and sat a spectacle of terror, misery and rage. He was afraid to speak, or look, or move, or sit still. Abject, crouching and miserable, he was a greater degradation to the form he bore than if he had been a loathsome wound from head to heel."

On the publication of *Bleak House*, there was much criticism on the physical impossibility of Krook being a victim of spontaneous combustion. Later, in the preface, the novelist maintained his ground, and brought forward a number of "notable facts" in support of his position. The critics replied that persons had undoubtedly been burned under circumstances not well accounted for, but, that the living body ever became ignited, and burned like a candle, or smouldered away, until nothing but ashes or charcoal was left, was a theory which would be admitted by no scientific man whose opinion was entitled to the slightest respect. Although the dispute eventually died down, I believe the question has to this day never been satisfactorily settled.*

In this connection I recall that the late F. Hopkinson Smith, author and illustrator of that charming book, "In Dickens' London," once told me that nothing he had ever read left such a horrid sensation on his mind as the description "leading-up" to the discovery of Krook's unnatural death.

"'What, in the devil's name,' says Mr. Guppy (to Tony), 'is this! Look at my fingers!'"

"A thick, yellow liquor defiles them, which is offensive to the touch and sight and more offensive to the smell. A stagnant, sickening oil, with some natural repulsion in it that makes them both shudder . . . From the corner of the window-sill, it slowly drips and creeps away down the bricks; (and) lies in a little thick nauseous pool."

I wish space permitted the inclusion of other unhappy endings, such as Mrs. Skewton's earthly departure within the rose-coloured curtains of her bed; Steerforth's death, near the home he has wrecked; Lady Dedlock's, at the grave of her lover; Rogue Riderhood's, in Bradley Headstone's deadly embrace; Miss Havisham's, in the flames of her faded wedding-dress; Mrs. Joe Gargery's passing, unable to pronounce her assailant's name; the Marquis St. Evremonde's violent end; Sydney Carton's supreme sacrifice; and so on. Perhaps the mere mention of the familiar names will again tempt the reader to that one particular shelf of books which has afforded him so much enjoyment.

FRIENDS OF THE DICKENS HOUSE (see page 262). The St. Pancras Branch is the first branch to become "a friend." What about your branch?

* See *The Dickensian*, 1936, page 151, and 1937, page 69.

WHO SAID THIS?

1. There's nothing dishonest or wrong in a supper, I hope.
2. You mark me, sir ? She shall have no pittance, but a fortune.
3. Should I be the handsomest creature in the world if I had but whiskers ?
4. It is a little hand to have done all that, and waste away with sickness. It is a very, very little hand.
5. Would you care a ha'penny for the Lord Chancellor if you'd known him in private and without his wig ?—certainly not.
6. Let us walk through country places, and sleep in fields and under trees, and never think of money again.
7. Before I'd consent to stand in awe of a man as she does of him I'd—I'd kill myself and write a letter first to say he did it.
8. Remember the once popular melody of "Begone dull care ; " fan the sinking flame with the wing of friendship ; and pass the rosy wine.
9. It's a stew of tripe, and bacon, and cow-heel, and steak, and peas, cauliflowers, new potatoes, and sparrow-grass, all working up together in one delicious gravy.
10. Please will you come and show the lodgings ; it's eighteen shillings a week and us finding plate and linen. Boots and clothes is extra, and fires in winter-time is e ghtpence a day.
11. I wonder if one of these gentlemen knew there was nothing in the cupboard at home, whether he'd stop on purpose, and make believe that he wanted to call somewhere, that I might earn a trifle.
12. Placing my finger upon this blue wafer with the vandyked corners, I am constrained to remark in a distant tone of voice—don't be alarmed, ma'am, it is merely a form of law—that I deliver this, as my act and deed.
13. How kind it is of you, sir, to wait till then . . . Some people, sir, would have sold or removed the goods—oh dear, the very instant the law allowed 'em. Some people, sir, would have been all flintiness and granite.
14. If you see a woman a driving, you'll always perceive that she never will keep her whip still ; the horse can't go fast enough for her. If cattle have got their proper load you never can persuade a woman that they'll not bear something more.
15. That's the happiness of you young people. You don't know what it is to be low in your feelings. You always have your appetites too, and what a comfort that is.
16. The fire is like a book to me—the only book I ever learned to read ; and many an old story it tells me. It's music, for I should know its voice among a thousand, and there are other voices in its roar . . . It's my memory, that fire, and shows me all my life.
17. Miss Sally will teach him law, the delightful study of the law she'll be his guide, his friend, his companion, his Blackstone, his Coke upon Littleton, his Young Lawyer's Best Companion
18. Stay Satan, stay. Tempt not the woman that doth incline her ear to thee, but hearken to the voice of him that calleth. He hath a lamb from the fold.

The answers (to be found in *The Old Curiosity Shop*) are given on page 258.

UNCOLLECTED SPEECHES

III.

SPEECH AT THE FIRST FESTIVAL DINNER OF THE PLAYGROUND AND GENERAL RECREATION SOCIETY, ON TUESDAY, JUNE THE 1ST, 1858.

GENTLEMEN,

If you will allow me to recall the little train of familar incidents through which I took a stroll from my own house within these last two or three hours, perhaps it will as aptly introduce the business we have in hand as a much more elaborate and a much more tiresome introduction. You must know that I have still at home one very dear young child who has not arrived at years of sufficient discretion to go to school in France or Germany with his brothers; who lives on terms of personal hostility towards all the cats in the neighbouring gardens, and who invents cats besides for the excitement of a Scotch terrier. These two—the English child and the Scotch dog—perpetually flying in and out of the garden door in a sort of poetical rapture of cats, worry me very much more than I ever saw them worry any other living thing; for, indeed, they only seek a pretext for being constantly in motion, and are innocent of all harm. This very afternoon, a few hours ago, they were so strongly under the influence of this fury of cats, that I, sitting in my own room, endeavouring with a heavy heart to consider my present responsibilities, found myself unable to collect my senses by any means. So I resolved to go out for a short stroll. The first thing I saw, when I went out of my own door, was a policeman hiding among the lilac trees apparently lying in wait for some burglar or murderer. After observing him with great dread and anxiety for a minute or two, I was much relieved to find that the object of his vigilance was nothing worse than a hoop, which he presently took into custody, and carried off to the station-house. Now, my way happened to lie through three of the leading squares. In the first square I encountered a company of seven little boys, each boy carrying a boy much larger than himself, an old pickle-bottle, and a very home-made fishing rod; with which impediments they were fagging up to Hampstead ponds, where I should judge that the party would scarcely arrive in time to tumble in before dark. I found the dignity of the second square, which is a highly genteel one, very much impaired by its having the game of hop-scotch chalked all over its pavement; and here too I found my own personal dignity suffered some little detriment through my becoming, without my own consent, the centre-point or pivot of a dodging game between two boys who evaded each other around me, and lunged at each other before me, and made no more account of me than if I were a sort of moving post or pillar. Coming to the long hackney-coach stand in that neighbourhood, I found the waterman in a state of red-heat and ire, because the children's shuttlecocks were flying about the horses' ears, and because a train of little creatures, hailing an imaginary "Bal—loon!" were filing in

and out among his water-tubs. In the third square I arrived in time to dry the tears and relieve the distresses of two diminutive little creatures, the prey of a third diminutive little creature, a size larger, who, in default of having anything else to play with, had taken off their caps and thrown them down an area. And so I arrived in the course of time at Lincoln's Inn Fields, where I positively seemed to find myself in an enemy's country; prodigious and awful spikes being stuck into the posts of that neighbourhood for the impalement of the youth of London; and three distinct rushes taking place while I was there on the part of an officer in a gold-laced hat, and armed with a drawn cane, who drove before him a flying cloud of boys and girls, and pursued them with horrible menaces. Thus I happily arrived at last in the haven where you now behold me, meditating very much upon the great need there is, in London and in all large towns, of places for the children to play in; and considering with what a determined self-assertion nature declares that play they must, and play they will, somewhere or other, under whatsoever circumstances of difficulty.

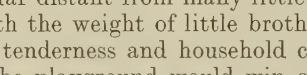
Now, Gentlemen, in the main, I quite agree with the reverend doctor* who just now so eloquently expressed himself; but I begin with children, because we all began as children; and I confine myself to children to-night, because the child is father of the man. Some majestic minds out of doors may, for anything I know, and certainly for anything I care, consider it a very humdrum and low proceeding to stop, in a country full of steam-engines, power-looms, big ships, monster mortars, and great guns of all sorts, to consider where the children are to play. Nevertheless, I know that the question is a very kind one, and a very necessary one. The surgeon and the recruiting sergeant will tell you with great emphasis, that the children's play is of immense importance to a community in the development of bodies: and the clergyman, the schoolmaster, and the moral philosopher, in all degrees, will tell you with no less emphasis, that the children's play is of great importance to a community in the development of minds. I venture to assert that there can be no physical health without play; that there can be no efficient and satisfactory work without play; that there can be no sound and wholesome thought without play. A country full of dismal little old men and women who had never played would be in a mighty bad way indeed; and you may depend upon it that without play, and good play, too, those powerful English cheers which have driven the sand of Asia before them, and made the very ocean shake, would degenerate into a puling whimper that would be the most consolatory sound that can possibly be conceived to all the tyrants on the face of the earth.

Now, Gentlemen, great towns constantly increasing about us, as the national trade and prosperity increase; houses constantly crowding together and continually accumulating; and the fields being always put at an always increasing distance from the great mass of the people it becomes a very serious question where the children shall play, and

* The Rev. Dr. Irons.

how they shall grow up into men and women who must have played, or it would be better for them and for all of us that they had never been born. The great importance of this question, in its many aspects both of humanity and policy, so strongly suggested itself to that gentleman who has been several times mentioned to-night, and who cannot be mentioned too often—the Rev. Mr. Laing—so strongly suggested itself to him, not yet a year ago, that he conceived the idea of establishing a Playground Society; in other words a combination of certain ladies and gentlemen of some influence and position, who, being agreed on the main question, should resolve to advance it by all means in their power. This infant society began by corresponding with the governing authorities in several large towns, and with other persons in position, with a view to ascertain their opinion. It also sought to elicit the opinion of that great mover of all opinion, the press. A cordial support of the principle, and an earnest approval of it, were, I believe, unanimously accorded. The Society then endeavoured, as Mr. Slaney has intimated, to impress upon the owners of lands the great benefit they would render to the country by sometimes conceding small gifts of open places for this benevolent purpose. Mr. Slaney himself, ever foremost in such good objects, brought in a Bill to facilitate the legal transfer of such lands, which Bill I have some reason to hope will pass without opposition. The Chief Commissioner of Public Works has further signified his approval that what are called "school treats" shall be allowed to be held in the easily accessible public parks, in certain parts of them set apart for that good purpose. The Society has also been in communication with the Government, and it hopes with some good effect, towards the reservation of Smithfield as a place of children's recreation. In a word, it has by every means in its power, during its brief existence of eight or nine months, cleared and paved the way for the distinct and plain proposal which I have to make to you. Everybody says, "Begin this good and necessary work by all means"; but nobody begins it. It is indeed extremely difficult to begin. We must remember that it is much more difficult in the present than it will be in the future, because the present finds the houses closely clustered together and the towns increased, whereas it is to be hoped that the future will find open spaces reserved, before the houses are agglomerated, and before the towns are so densely grown; and it is easy to understand that it is far more easy not to build houses up, than to find them built up, and have to pay for them and pull them down. The work, then, is very difficult to begin. Yes. But how difficult is it to begin? Now, we happen to know that a playground in the populous Metropolitan district of St. Pancras, or in Marylebone Parish, somewhere in the close neighbourhood about Manchester Square, would cost perhaps £1,000. There are two earnest and munificent ladies known to this Society, one of whom will give towards the St. Pancras experiment £100, and one of whom will give towards the Marylebone experiment £100, if other people will be liberal in their degree, and according to the extent of their power, and subscribe the rest. This is, in fact, the Society's first report;

and what I am to do to-night, is to entreat your help that the experiment may be made. There is no kind of castle-building, observe, in the case. The Society does not ask you for the vague and indefinite means of constructing fifty possible playgrounds or five hundred impossible playgrounds : it asks you for the clearly defined and ascertained means of proving the justice of their case by one experiment, and only one. I will only trouble you by observing further, that of the success of the experiment, if practically and wisely carried out ; of its being followed by innumerable imitations, and of its doing an incalculable amount of good ; I myself have hardly a doubt. I believe, as Mr. Slaney has said, that the poor people would gladly even pay for a playground near to their own dwellings where they knew their children would be safe, under just so much supervision, and no more, as should exclude gross language, corrupting habits, and the demoralisation and vagabondism of the streets. We have made, as we all know, very great improvements in respect of our public parks ; but they are obviously and unavoidably too far distant from many little legs and many little arms, encumbered with the weight of little brothers and sisters ; and I think the domestic tenderness and household consideration evinced in this very idea of the playground would win over the parents who have experience of this truth every day, and would attract their confidence immediately. I will not enter into the question whether the Playground Society shall aspire to add to its name the title of " General Recreation Society," and to provide cheap *indoor* amusements for the young. I confess I am not myself quite clear upon that point. I have some individual doubt whether it might not become a little too wise, and whether, taking too deliberate an aim at these young birds, it might not blow them away with an overcharge of instruction. But that is no part of the question to-night. The question I have to put to you —leaving you to supply all its need of attendant considerations of humanity, kindness, compassion, justice, and policy, for the present and especially for the future—the question I have to put to you, and through you to the public, is, whether the case shall be proved or disproved, and whether this one experiment shall be tried or not tried ? I beg to propose you to drink, " Prosperity to the Playground Society. "



A PRESENTATION COPY TO FREDERICK SALMON

We have received from Mr. N. Lawson Lewis a copy of the latest publication of the Rowfant Club, Cleveland, U.S.A., " Books and I," to which he has written an introductory note. The book is by Mr Paul Lemperley, and describes amongst other treasures in his library the presentation copy of *Master Humphrey's Clock*, inscribed " Frederick Salmon Esquire, from Charles Dickens, Twenty Fifth October 1841." Accompanying the volume is a letter from Dickens to Salmon—a surgeon who had performed a minor operation on Dickens a few months before—dated Thirtieth December 1841 presenting further books " which complete your set so far."

FOR ONE NIGHT ONLY

DICKENS'S APPEARANCES AS AN AMATEUR ACTOR

By WALTER DEXTER

I.

WE have already traced in detail the work which Dickens did as a writer for the stage.* In this and the succeeding articles an endeavour is made to place on record a concise and complete account of the plays staged by Dickens as an amateur actor, with reproductions of the playbills of each set of performances. As this is the first time such an attempt has been made to illustrate fully this important phase of Dickens's recreation, the writer feels confident that the present series will be of great interest to the student of Dickens's passion for the stage, and will show the ability with which he gathered round him the "company of distinguished amateurs" as it was called; and the work done by them in the cause of charity. It will be sufficient to give only statements of fact concerning each series of performances in London and the provinces; for to embellish the account with extracts from press and other criticism of each play would be but to repeat what has already been recorded in other places. The object is to show clearly when and where the various plays were performed, what were the objects for which the performances were given, what were the plays presented, and who were the actors taking part.

* * * * *

At Chatham, before Dickens had reached the age of ten, he wrote a tragedy, "Misnar, the Sultan of India," which he probably played on the toy stage which James Lamert, a distant cousin, constructed for him. We have no definite details about this, but Forster tells us that James "had a turn for private theatricals" in "the quarters of his stepmother's second husband," the Ordnance Hospital at Chatham; so there is little doubt that if a juvenile character were required, young Charles was certain to be given the part.

In the happier days at Wellington House Academy, the toy-theatre had in Dickens an ardent supporter, and Dr. Henry Danson has left a record of this phase of school-day life, when representations of "The Miller and His Men" and "Cherry and Fair Star" were given "in very gorgeous form."

During the days of early manhood, when he was working as a solicitor's clerk and later as a reporter in the Ecclesiastical Courts at Doctors' Commons, the stage was the one goal before him as the profession above all others which he wished to adopt. Light comedy was his particular forte, and he studied unceasingly, being specially attracted by the art of the elder Mathews. He was not much over twenty when he made application to the manager of Covent Garden Theatre for a part in one of their plays, and an appointment was made for a later date—which fortunately he was unable to keep. All this

* See *The Dickensian*, 1937, pages 81, 163, 254. 1938, page 36.

has been told to us by Forster, mostly in Dickens's own words, and no new information has come to light these past sixty years which has enabled us to add anything to our knowledge of this period of Dickens's life.

That home theatricals took up much of his leisure at this time is evident from the discovery of portions of the manuscript* of a play entitled *O Thello*. According to a written note by John Dickens on one of the pages, the date it was privately performed by the family was 1833. But no further information concerning the actual representation is available.

We are, however, more fortunate in regard to another amateur performance in the same year. Letters to Henry Kolle and Maria Beadnell afford us the first authenticated account of amateur theatricals at home. Count de Suzannet possesses one of the play-bills, enclosed in a letter of invitation to Thomas Beard ; a facsimile is now printed. This is the earliest evidence of the thoroughness with which Dickens not only stage-managed these performances, but also assumed the duties of business manager. The printing of the play-bill shows that no expense was spared to give as perfect a representation as possible of an actual theatrical production. Further proof of this thoroughness on the part of Dickens will be given when dealing with the performances of later years.

II.

The first public appearance of Dickens as an amateur actor was in Montreal on the 25th May, 1842, when, together with the officers of the Coldstream Guards, he performed at the Queen's Theatre before an audience of five to six hundred, in three plays for the benefit of a charity. The whole burden of the stage production was on his shoulders —as it was in all subsequent adventures of a dramatic nature. A full account of the rehearsals and the performance is given in letters to Forster and Felton.

He was not " placarded as stage-manager for nothing," he wrote to Forster : " Everybody was told they would have to submit to the most iron despotism ; and didn't I come Macready over them ? Oh no. By no means. Certainly not. The pains I have taken with them and the perspiration I have expended, during the last ten days, exceed in amount anything you can imagine. I had regular plots of the scenery made out, and lists of the properties wanted ; and had them nailed up by the prompter's chair. Every letter that was to be delivered was written ; every piece of money that had to be given, provided and not a single thing lost sight of. I prompted, myself, when I was not on ; when I was, I made the regular prompter of the theatre my deputy ; and I never saw anything so perfectly touch and go, as the first two pieces. The bedroom scene in the interlude was as well furnished as Vestris had it ; with a ' practicable ' fireplace blazing away like mad, and everything in a concatenation accordingly."

To Professor C. C. Felton he described how he directed the rehearsal

* Reproduced in facsimile in *The Dickensian* for 1930, pages 9-12.

Private Theatricals.

STAGE MANAGER, MR. CHARLES DICKENS.

ON SATURDAY EVENING, APRIL 27, 1833,

At Seven o'clock precisely. The performances will commence with

AN INTRODUCTORY PROLOGUE;

THE PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS BY

MR EDWARD BARROW, MR MILTON, MR. CHARLES DICKENS, MISS AUSTIN AND MISS DICKENS.

IMMEDIATELY AFTER WHICH WILL BE PRESENTED THE OPERA OF

CLARI.

The Duke Vivaldi	MR BRAMWELL.
Rolamo, a Farmer, (Father to Clari)	MR C DICKENS.
Jocoso, (Valet to the Duke)	MR H AUSTIN.
Nicola	MR MILTON.
Geronio	MR E BARROW
Nimpedo	MR R AUSTIN.
Pages to the Duke	MASTERS F DICKENS & A. DICKENS
Clari	MISS DICKENS.
Fidalma (her Mother)	MISS L DICKENS
Vespina	MISS AUSTIN.
Ninette	MISS OPPENHEIM

CHARACTERS IN THE EPISODE.

The Nobleman	MR HENRY KOLLE.
Pelgrino, a Farmer	MR JOHN DICKENS.
Wife of Pelgrino	MISS URQUHART.
Leoda	MISS OPPENHEIM

AFTER WHICH THE FAVOURITE INTERLUDE OF

The Married Bachelor.

Sir Charles Courtall	MR C DICKENS.
Sharp	MR. JOHN URQUHART.
Lady Courtall	MISS L. DICKENS.
Grace	MISS DICKENS

TO CONCLUDE WITH THE FARCE OF

Amateurs & Actors.

David Dulcet, Esq (a Musical Dramatic Amateur, who employs Mr. O P. Bustle, and attached to Theatricals and Miss Mary Hardacre)	MR H. AUSTIN.
Mr O P Bustle, (a Provincial Manager but engaged to superintend some Private Theatricals)	MR BRAMWELL.
Wing, (a poor Country Actor)	MR C DICKENS.
Berry, (an Actor for the heavy Business)	MR. BOSTON.
Elderberry, (a retired Manufacturer, simple in wit and manners, and utterly unacquainted with Theatricals)	MR. J DICKENS.
Timkins, (Elderberry's Factotum)	MR R. AUSTIN.
Geoffry Muffincap, (an elderly Charity Boy, let out as a Servant at Bustle's Lodging)	MR E BARROW.
Miss Mary Hardacre, (a fugitive Ward of Elderberry's	MISS DICKENS.
Mrs. Mary General, (a Strolling Tragedy Actress, and a serious evil to her Husband)	MISS OPPENHEIM

The Scenery by Messrs. H. Austin, Milton, H Kolle, and Assistants.——The Band which will be numerous and complete under the direction of Mr E. Barrow.

J. & C. Nichols, Printers, Earl's Court Cranbourn Street, Soho.

Reduced facsimile of play-bill in the possession of Count de Suzannet.

with his coat off—" the stage manager and universal manager—urging impracticable ladies and impossible gentlemen on to the very confines of insanity, shouting and driving about, in my own person, to an extent which would justify any philanthropic stranger in clapping me into a strait-waistcoat without further enquiry." " The *furor* has come strong upon me again," he wrote later in the same letter. " I begin to be once more of opinion that nature intended me for the lessee of a national theatre, and that pen, ink, and paper, have spoiled a manager."

As to his own part of Mr. Snobbington—for which he had sent to New York for a special wig, " it went with a roar all through." It was possibly a part he had played before, he entered into it with such gusto ; but he does not say as much to Forster, although he adds in his letter that " if they had done ' Love, Law and Physic,' as was at first proposed, I was already ' up ' in Flexible, having played it of old, before my authorship days."

Mrs. Dickens played also, " playing devilish well, I assure you " : and " all the ladies were capital." According to the local custom, the plays were repeated to a paying audience the following Saturday for the theatre manager's benefit, " substituting, of course, real actresses for the ladies," observes Dickens. This was in accordance with the custom of the times—the women's parts in plays produced by amateurs were always taken by professional actresses when the performances were given in public.

It has not been previously recorded that a silver cup was presented to Dickens as a memento of this occasion. The inscription read :

Presented to
CHARLES DICKENS
by
British Officers and friends
Montreal, 1842

This cup was sold at Sothebys in June last.

III.

It was this play-acting before a large audience which first suggested to Dickens the idea of arranging something similar at home with his own particular friends. However, it was not until three years had passed that the idea actually matured in the production of " Every Man in His Humour " at Miss Kelly's Theatre in Dean Street, London on September 20th, 1845. This seems to have been a purely private venture on the part of those acting, each one of whom had the privilege of inviting about thirty guests.

The cost, including the supper which followed, was £6 4*s*. for each male member of the cast.

Miss Kelly's Theatre in Dean Street was built in 1840 by an actress named Frances Maria Kelly to mark her fiftieth birthday. It occupied

Private Theatricals.

COMMITTEE.

Mrs. TORRENS. | Mrs. PERRY.
W. C. ERMATINGER, Esq. | Captain TORRENS.
THE EARL OF MULGRAVE.

STAGE MANAGER--MR. CHARLES DICKENS.

QUEEN'S THEATRE, MONTREAL.

ON WEDNESDAY EVENING, MAY 25TH, 1842,
WILL BE PERFORMED,

A ROLAND FOR AN OLIVER.

MRS. SELBORNE. —— Mrs Torrens
MARIA DARLINGTON. —— Miss Griffin
MRS. FIXTURE. —— Miss Ermatinger.

MR. SELBORNE. —— Lord Mulgrave
ALFRED HIGHFLYER. —— Mr. Charles Dickens
SIR MARK CHASE. —— Honorable Mr. Methuen
FIXTURE. —— Captain Willoughby.
GAMEKEEPER. —— Captain Granville

AFTER WHICH, AN INTERLUDE IN ONE SCENE, (FROM THE FRENCH,) CALLED

Past Two o'Clock in the Morning.

THE STRANGER. —— Captain Granville
MR. SNOBBINGTON. —— Mr. Charles Dickens

TO CONCLUDE WITH THE FARCE, IN ONE ACT, ENTITLED

DEAF AS A POST.

MRS. PLUMPLEY. — Mrs Torrens
AMY TEMPLETON. — Mrs Charles Dickens!!!!!!!!
SOPHY WALTON. — Mrs Perry.
SALLY MAGGS. — Miss Griffin
CAPTAIN TEMPLETON. — Captain Torrens
MR. WALTON. —— Captain Willoughby.
TRISTRAM SAPPY. —— Doctor Griffin
CRUPPER. —— Lord Mulgrave
GALLOP. —— Mr. Charles Dickens.

MONTREAL, May 24, 1842. GAZETTE OFFICE.

Reduced facsimile of play-bill in the Forster Collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

the site at the rear of her residence, No. 73 Dean Street. Her primary object was to establish a school for acting, and a theatre for amateur productions. Fanny Kelly—to give her the name by which she was popularly known, was eccentric, and, from the letters of Dickens written at about this time, one gathers that her theatre was conducted

STRICTLY PRIVATE.

Amateur Performance,

AT MISS KELLY'S THEATRE, 73, DEAN STREET, SOHO,

On Saturday Evening, September 20th, 1845,

WHEN WILL BE PERFORMED

BEN JONSON'S COMEDY OF

EVERY MAN IN HIS HUMOUR.

CHARACTERS

Knowell	*An Old Gentleman.*	Thomas Cash	*Kitely's Cashier.*
Edward Knowell	*His Son.*	Oliver Cob	*A Water Bearer.*
Brainworm	*The Father's Man.*	Justice Clement	*An old merry Magistrate.*
George Downright	*A plain Squire.*	Roger Formal	*His Clerk.*
Wellbred	*His half-brother.*	William	*His Servant.*
Kitely	*A Merchant.*	James	*Wellbred's Servant.*
Captain Bobadil	*A Paul's man.*	Dame Kitely	*Kitely's Wife.*
Master Stephen	*A Country Gull.*	Mistress Bridget	*His Sister.*
Master Matthew	*The Town Gull.*	Tib	*Cob's Wife.*

TO CONCLUDE WITH THE FARCE, IN ONE ACT, CALLED

A GOOD NIGHT'S REST;

Or, TWO O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING.

CHARACTERS

Mr Snobbington. The Stranger.

Previous to the Comedy . . . . . The Overture to William Tell.
Previous to the Farce . . . . . The Overture to La Gazza Ladra.

☞ *The Cards of Invitation are presentable at the Theatre, from Seven o'Clock. The performance will commence at Half-past Seven exactly: by which time it is requested that the whole of the Company may be seated.*

EVENING DRESS.

Reduced facsimile of play-bill in possession of Mr. Walter Dexter.

A copy of this play-bill in the Forster Collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum is embellished with sketches by Maclise of Dickens as Bobadil and Forster as Kitely. It was reproduced in *The Dickensian*, 1917, page 86.

on somewhat unorthodox lines. In 1854 the name of the theatre was changed to the "Soho"; in 1863 it was renamed the "New Royalty Theatre," and later became the "Royalty." At the time of writing it is scheduled for early demolition.

As the names of the actors were not printed on the play-bill, there have been many conflicting accounts of their identity. Adair Fitz-Gerald in his "Dickens and the Drama" (1910) gives the cast, with the following note: "This Royalty cast has never been accurately presented before. John Forster does not give it, nor does F. G. Kitton, nor T. E. Pemberton." But even FitzGerald's list is incorrect, as it states that the part of Wellbred was taken by George Cattermole. T. J. Thompson acted the part, and his name and not Cattermole's appears on the card of invitation (one of which is in the writer's possession) as one of the hosts on this occasion.

Adair FitzGerald is also incorrect in the date of the performance, now settled by the facsimile play-bill.

The full cast was as follows:

Knowell	Henry Mayhew
Edward Knowell	Frederick Dickens
Brainworm	Mark Lemon
Downright	Dudley Costello
Wellbred	T. J. Thompson
Kitely	John Forster
Captain Bobadil	Charles Dickens
Master Stephen	Douglas Jerrold
Master Mathew	John Leach
Thomas Cash	Augustus Dickens
Oliver Cobb	Percival Leigh
Justice Clement	Frank Stone
Roger Formal	— Evans
William	Gilbert à Beckett
James	W. B. Jerrold
Dame Kitely	Miss Fortescue
Mistress Bridget	Miss Hinton
Tib	Miss Bew

Henry Mayhew was the same age as Dickens, and associated with Mark Lemon in the founding of "Punch" in 1841. He had been a frequent contributor to "Bentley's Miscellany" under Dickens's editorship; with Gilbert à Beckett he had started "Figaro in London" in 1831; and what is more interesting, it was he who, in 1832, founded the paper "The Thief" which reprinted from the "Monthly Magazine" one of Dickens's earliest stories, *The Boarding House*. Mayhew did not appear in any of the later productions of the amateurs.

Frederick Dickens and Augustus Dickens were two younger brothers of Charles.

Mark Lemon was also born in the same year as Dickens—just a few weeks earlier; he was the first editor of "Punch," and although a contributor to "Bentley's Miscellany," and associated with Gilbert à Beckett in the dramatisation of *The Chimes* produced, by special permission of Dickens, at the Adelphi Theatre on December 19th,

1844, did not become a close friend of Dickens until these theatricals brought them together. Henceforth Lemon was the mainstay of Dickens in this connection.

Dudley Costello was born in 1803. He was educated for the Army and spent some years abroad. He also had contributed to " Bentley's Miscellany," and for a time had been an actor on the London stage, and his experience was therefore a great asset.

T. J. Thompson was a personal friend of Dickens, a man of some means who had married Christiana Weller to whom Dickens had introduced him some years before at Liverpool; the amusing and interesting story is fairly well known now, and needs no repetition here.

John Forster was also another of those friends born in 1812 and his connection with Dickens was such as needs no further notice here.

Douglas Jerrold, born in 1803, was the most experienced member of the company. The son of an actor, at the age of twenty-six he wrote " Black Eyed Susan," which was produced at the St. James's Theatre, and made the fortunes of more than one actor and manager; but Jerrold received only £70 for his work. He contributed to "Punch" from its second number, and it was through his friendship that Dickens became acquainted with the majority of the " Punch " staff, from whom the greater part of the amateur company was drawn.

Percival Leigh was another of the " Punch " men, but he appears to have dropped out of the Company after its first performances of " Every Man in His Humour."

John Leech was born in 1817 and was probably the best known man of all the " Punch " contributors; his close personal friendship with Dickens and his artistic co-operation in the *Christmas Books* have been recently fully detailed in *The Dickensian.*

Frank Stone was born in 1800; he was a well-known artist and was made A.R.A. in 1851, at which time he was living in Tavistock Square. His family and that of Dickens were on the most intimate terms.

The Mr. Evans who played Formal was probably partner in the firm of Bradbury and Evans, the proprietors of " Punch," and at that time the publishers of Dickens's works. He does not appear to have taken any part in the later theatricals.

Gilbert à Beckett was one year Dickens's senior. He was the first editor of " Figaro in London," a paper that ceased publication in 1839. In 1841 " Punch " was started, and he contributed to it from the first number. Although a prolific and successful comic writer, literature was not his main occupation; he was a Metropolitan Police Magistrate.

W. B. Jerrold (later known as Blanchard Jerrold) was the son of Douglas Jerrold. He was born in 1826, and on the death of his father in 1857 succeeded him as the editor of " Lloyd's News." This was his only appearance with the Company.

The ladies were all professional actresses. Miss Fortescue was a well-known actress of the time; she had appeared as Meg in the

Dickens as Captain Bobadil in "Every Man in His Humour"

From a painting by C. R. Leslie, R.A.

Adelphi production of *The Chimes* in December, 1844, and as Mary Graham in a dramatisation of *Martin Chuzzlewit* at the Lyceum earlier in the same year.

Such was the personnel of the first amateur company of Dickens. Other well-known people joined it at later dates, and we reserve mention of them until the occasion arises.

"The Times" gave a most appreciative notice of the performance, saying that although it was a matter of principle with them never to give criticisms of amateur performances, they found this an occasion on which to depart from their rule, the remarkable nature of the performance being not only a sufficient excuse but "there was nothing that could incur censure even to a severe standard of criticism." They gave a brief account of the notable persons taking part, referring to the cast as "a complete curiosity" and to Dickens as "the immortal Boz."

"The Athenaeum" referred to it as "a memorable and pleasant evening," and gave a full list of the cast, saying "the play-bill will be a literary curiosity fifty years hence." This prophecy has been justified.

Mrs. Carlyle gave her husband an account of this performance in a letter dated September 23rd, 1845. She evidently did not understand amateur theatricals being done in a public theatre, for she writes: 'The public theatre, scenes painted by Stanfield, costumes 'rather

exquisite ' together with a certain amount of proficiency in the amateurs, overlaid all ideas of Private Theatricals, and, considering it as Public Theatricals, the acting was most insipid ; not one performer among them could be called good, and none that could be called absolutely bad. Douglas Jerrold seemed to me the best . . . . . Forster as Kitely and Dickens as Captain Bobadil were much on a par ; but Forster preserved his identity, even through his loftiest flights of Macreadyism ; while poor little Dickens, all painted in black and red, and affecting the voice of a man of six feet, would have been unrecognisable for the mother who bore him."

According to Mrs. Carlyle there were six to seven hundred people present, including the Duke of Devonshire, Alfred Tennyson, Sir Alexander and Lady Gordon, Mrs. Macready, Count D'Orsay, J. Payne Collier.

IV.

The immediate result of this private performance was that a public one in aid of charity was demanded. This took place at the St. James's Theatre on Saturday, November 15th, 1845, in the presence of the Prince Consort and for the benefit of the Sanatorium.

From an account in " The Times " it would appear that, with only two exceptions, the same cast acted in the play as had performed at the Royalty Theatre in the previous September. Cattermole played Wellbred in place of Thompson, and W. Eaton, brother-in-law of John Leech, took à Beckett's part of William.

It has not been possible to procure for reproduction a copy of the play-bill of this important event, the first public appearance in England of Dickens as an actor.

" A Good Night's Rest " followed Ben Jonson's play, the parts being taken by Dickens and Mark Lemon. This was the play formerly entitled " Past Two O'clock in the Morning."

At the close of the performance at the St. James's, Forster announced from the stage that a further performance would be given for Miss Kelly's benefit, when another old play, probably " The Alchemist,' would be revived.

The benefit for Miss Kelly took place a few weeks later (January 3rd, 1846) at her theatre in Dean Street ; instead of " The Alchemist," Beaumont and Fletcher's play, " The Elder Brother " was performed, together with the farce, " Comfortable Lodgings."

For this, Miss Kelly spoke a special prologue written by Dickens, and as this has not been published before (except in the Nonesuch Dickens) we reproduce on page 242 a facsimile copy of the manuscript.

W. H. Wills, the only newcomer in the company, was two years older than Dickens. He was one of the original members of the " Punch " staff, and later assisted Dickens in the editorship of *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*.

(*To be continued*)

STRICTLY PRIVATE.

MISS KELLY'S THEATRE,

No. 73, DEAN STREET, SOHO SQUARE.

MISS KELLY HAS THE HONOR TO ANNOUNCE TO THE NOBILITY, GENTRY, HER SUBSCRIBERS, AND FRIENDS,

THAT HER BENEFIT IS FIXED FOR

SATURDAY, JANUARY the 3rd., 1846,

UPON WHICH OCCASION THE

DISTINGUISHED AMATEURS

Whose Performances have created such extraordinary interest, and confirmed the still existing taste for the legitimate Drama, will (as a tribute of regard for which she cannot express too much her gratified feelings and deep sense of obligation) appear for the last time.

THE PERFORMANCES WILL CONSIST OF (ALTERED FOR THIS REPRESENTATION)

FLETCHER'S COMEDY OF

THE ELDER BROTHER.

CHARACTERS IN THE PLAY.

LOUIS	(A Lord)	Mr. DUDLEY COSTELLO.
MIRAMONT	..	Mr. MARK LEMON.
BRISAC	A Justice, Brother to Miramont } Country Gentlemen ..	Mr. LEECH.
CHARLES	(a Scholar) } Sons to { Brisac	Mr. FORSTER.
EUSTACE	(a Courtier) } Sons to { Brisac	Mr. CHARLES DICKENS.
EGREMONT	Friends to ..	Mr. FREDERICK DICKENS.
COWSY	Eustace	Mr. AUGUSTUS DICKENS.
NOTARY	.. ..	Mr. W. H. WILLS.
ANDREW	(Servant to Charles) .. Cook, Butler, &c. &c.	Mr. DOUGLAS JERROLD.
ANGELINA	Daughter to Louis {	Miss FORTESCUE.
SYLVIA	(her Woman) ..	Miss HINTON.

A Prologue will be spoken by Miss KELLY.

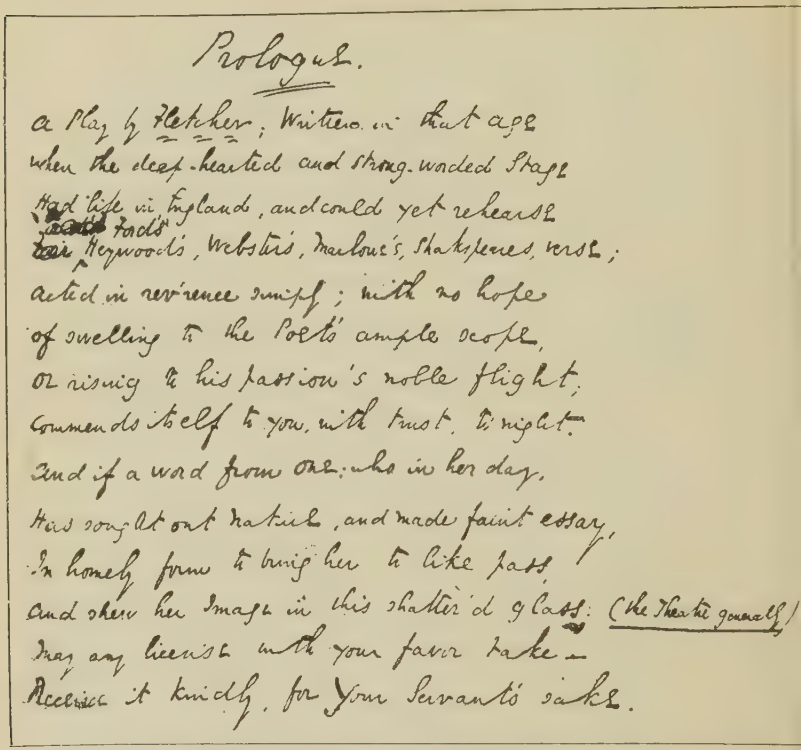
AND

MR. PEAKE'S FARCE OF

COMFORTABLE LODGINGS.

CAPTAIN BONASSUS (an old French Officer)	Mr. FRANK STONE.
BOMBADIER BABILLARD (his comrade)	Mr. LEECH.
VINCENT DORVILLE (Lover of Antoinette)	Mr. AUGUSTUS DICKENS.
SIR FLIPPINGTON MIFF (an English Traveller)	Mr. CHARLES DICKENS.
RIGMAROLE (his Valet)	Mr. MARK LEMON.
ROUÉ (a broken Lieutenant)	Mr. GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.
MONSIEUR DE CACHET (Intendant of French Police)	Mr. FORSTER.
GREGORY (Servant to Bonassus) ..	Mr. W. H. WILLS.
ANTOINETTE (Daughter to Bonassus)	Miss MAY.
MADAM PELAGIE (Sister to Bonassus)	Miss BEW.

Reduced facsimile of an original play-bill, in the possession of Mr. Walter Dexter.



Prologue.

a Play by Fletcher; Written in that age
when the deep-hearted and strong-worded Stage
Had life in England, and could yet rehearse
Fair Heywood's, Webster's, Marlowe's, Shakspeares verse;
acted in reverence simply; with no hope
of swelling to the Poet's ample scope,
Or rising to his passion's noble flight,
Commends itself to you, with trust, to night.
And if a word from one, who in her day,
Has sought out nature, and made faint essay,
In homely form to bring her to like pass
And shew her Image in this shatter'd glass: (the Theatre generally)
May any license with your favor take —
Receive it kindly, for Your Servant's sake.

Special prologue written by Dickens for "The Elder Brother," see page 240

THE LAST OF DOCTORS' COMMONS

QUITE recently the "Times" devoted a leading article to the coming disappearance of the last morsel of Doctors' Commons, saying "Doctors' Commons has clean gone; but Doctors' Commons will live for ever"—because of its association with Dickens; in *Sketches by Boz;* in *Pickwick*; in *David Copperfield*; in *Our Mutual Friend*; and personally. From some time in 1829 until 1832 or probably a year later Dickens worked for the proctors in the Courts here; he actually rented a little office, at 5, Bell Yard, Carter Lane, and established himself as a shorthand-writer. In St. Bartholomew's Church is preserved the transcript in Dickens's hand, from his shorthand notes, of the judgment in the case of Jarman *v.* Bagster; it is dated 18 November 1830 and signed at the foot "C. Dickens, Shorthand Writer, 5, Bell Yard Doctors' Commons."

In *David Copperfield* Dickens spoke in no uncertain tones of the evils surrounding the Commons, the work of which after 1857 was removed to the Law Courts and Somerset House. Ten years later the buildings forming the principal Courts were pulled down. The "Times" has no regrets: "We have Doctors' Commons in Dickens and can do without the real thing" is its concluding remark. So does Dickens live

SOUL DRAMA

By MARY L. PENDERED

MANY years ago I studied Greek drama under an Oxford professor and I remember very clearly a distinction he made between active drama and emotion, or soul drama. As we know, Bunyan wrote a symbolic soul drama in his "Mansoul," and in the poem before it these words occur: "Mansoul is the very seat of war." This seat of war has been the preoccupation of all novelists who make any pretence to the creation of real human characters.

Charles Dickens was no exception, though he did not very often set before us this hidden drama of the soul. Active drama was more in his line, for he was a born actor and there is, in most of his scenes, more than a trace of the theatre. His best-known characters are all ready, and seem made for, the stage. But here and there he used the forceps and very carefully dissected the souls of his creatures. Without labouring his psychology, or calling attention to it, as the modern writer is prone to do, he worked out a pure emotion drama in the soul of a man or woman. I have already treated this subject in two character studies, those of Richard Carson and Melvin Twemlow; the one a tragedy of slow corruption, the other a struggle between inborn timidity and nobility. Now I propose to touch on a few other such "silent battlefields," either without dramatic action or as a prelude to it.

There is one particular emotion drama in *Our Mutual Friend* to which I would call special attention. It is played entirely in the soul of a woman who appears, on the surface, to be quite soulless. There are, perhaps, no two persons in this book, or in any other Dickens novel, more thoroughly detestable than the Lammles. Even those despicable snobs, the Veneerings and Podsnaps, are not so utterly loathsome as this pair of fawning hypocrites who, having married one another simply for the money each supposes the other to possess, being disillusioned, agree to form an alliance for the purpose of wringing money out of every helpless fool that falls in their way.

We meet them quite early in the book at a dinner party given by the Veneerings; Sophronia Akershem, "a mature young lady," and Alfred Lammle "a mature young gentleman"; both assumed to be persons of some fortune. Why they should be does not transpire, for Alfred, although he "goes in a condescending, amateurish way into the city, attends meetings and has to do with traffic in shares," is a gentleman who lives by his wits, while Sophronia has only an annuity of £115. The Veneerings, however, have a pleasing way of picking up people who seem to be of social value, calling them their dearest friends, and introducing them to their other dearest friends, as persons to be cultivated, and they were no doubt taken in by this charming couple of "mature young people."

Thus we first meet them at a banquet given to fourteen of these beloved friends by the Veneerings. Four pigeon-breasted retainers in plain clothes stand in line in the hall and a fifth announces the

guests. He is known hereinafter to the reader as " the Analytical " because he resembles a gloomy analytical chemist and always seems to be saying " Chablis, sir—you wouldn't if you knew what it was made of," when he pours out the wine.

We are introduced to the principal guests—to the Podsnaps: Mr. Podsnap with red beads on his forehead and a crumpled shirt collar up behind; Mrs. Podsnap like a rocking-horse, with hard features and a majestic head-dress upon which Mr. Podsnap has hung golden offerings; to Mr. Twemlow, dry, polite, susceptible to east wind, and to the mature young persons, Sophronia, with raven locks and a complexion that lights up well when well powdered—as it is; to Alfred Lammle with " too much nose in his face, too much ginger in his whiskers, too much torso in his waistcoat and too much sparkle in his studs, his eyes, his buttons and his teeth." A little later on in the book we meet them again at their wedding where the Reverend Blank Blank, assisted by the Rev. Dash Dash, united in the bonds of matrimony Alfred Lammle, Esq., of Sackville Street, Piccadilly, to Sophronia, only daughter of the late Horatio Akershem, Esq., of Yorkshire. The fair bride was married from the house of Hamilton Veneering, Esq., of Stucconia, and was given away by Melvin Twemlow, Esq., of Duke Street, St. James's, second cousin to Lord Snigsworth of Snigsworthy Park, who " makes some opaque approach to perceiving that if the Rev. Blank Blank and the Rev. Dash Dash fail, after this, to become enrolled in the list of Veneerings dearest and oldest friends, they will have none but themselves to thank for it."

But—in about a fortnight—before the honeymoon is over, the happy pair discover how each has been deluded and have a row-royal on Shanklin sands when Sophronia calls her Alfred a " vile imposter " and weeps, while he, with a white face and green marks about his nose, jeers at her. When her rage is exhausted they agree never to forgive the Veneerings for this and to form an alliance between themselves, against their circumscribed social world, for the purpose of scrounging money out of the innocent and unwary.

Now we know that Alfred Lammle is without defence, as a contemptible adventurer. He is only surpassed by the worm Fledgeby, who becomes his dupe. Fledgeby is rich, with a fortune left him by his father and his own ill-gotten gains, but is by no means averse from making a marriage to increase his wealth, money being all he lives for. Alfred, with the assistance of his wife, plots to gain him the hand of Georgiana Podsnap, only child and heiress of the aforesaid Podsnap and his " rocking-horse " of a wife; for which service he contrives to get Fledgeby's note of hand for a considerable sum, if he pulls it off. And he would have pulled it off but for an unexpected intervener in the plot—Sophronia's soul!

She played her part well, up to a point. She fawned over, wheedled and cajoled the poor silly child—quite the silliest creature Dickens ever drew, not excepting Dora—into believing her, Sophronia, to be a loving and devoted friend. But she reckoned without Georgiana's heart—or her own heart. Perhaps Sophronia did not know she had a

heart till Georgiana touched it. The child loved and trusted her. She disliked Fledgeby and distrusted Alfred, but she adored Sophronia and believed in her. It was this tender, loving, adoration that broke down Sophronia's defences.

Up to this time we had seen her only as a hard, worldly, ruthless woman, pitting herself against a hard, ruthless world ; but we suddenly discover in her a heart that can be touched, a warm, passionate nature, crushed down and kept under by God knows what hardships and unkindnesses in her early life. It may possibly be that this was the first time in her life Sophronia had been loved for herself alone. It may be that the hope of that love had been roused by Alfred Lammle, only to end in a crushing disillusion. We have seen, in her quarrel on the seashore, that she was an emotional woman and could feel deeply, passionately. But we have had no warning of the sudden *volte face* which turned her from a cold-blooded conspirator to a tender, womanly friend, the saviour of a simple, helpless girl from a pitiful fate.

Here then is a soul drama of the profoundest interest, a silent battlefield in which Bunyan would have described Apollyan fighting against the Angels of Heaven. We are not told much about it till it comes upon us with sudden force. As I have said, Dickens does not prepare us with long, psychological monologues describing all Sophronia's reactions and struggles, as a modern writer would. He simply shows her in the moment of conquest over her worser self, when her inner fight is over and she is resolved to save the helpless Georgiana from the unspeakable Fledgeby, even at the cost of, who know what loss, and danger to herself ?

The scene where she enlists Twemlow as the means by which she can ease her conscience shows plainly enough what that fight has been. After saying " Mr. Twemlow, you have the soul of a gentleman and I know I can trust you," Sophronia lays bare her soul to him and we see its Gethesemane.

" It is impossible to tell you what the struggle in my mind has been before I could bring myself to speak to you as I do now. It is only in the conviction that I may trust you never to betray me that I can proceed. Sincerely promise me that you will never betray my confidence—that you will respect it, even though you may never respect me—and I shall be as satisfied as if you had sworn it."

(And there are still people who say that Dickens could not draw a gentleman !)

Then she tells him to warn Podsnap against her. The little gentleman is aghast. " How warn her father and not tell him ? Tell him how much ? Tell him how little ? I . . . I am getting lost."

" Tell him I am a matchmaker : tell him I am a designing woman. Tell him any such things of me : they will all be true . . . set my mind at rest with the assurance that you will interpose with the father and save this harmless girl."

A little later we have her heartrending apology for the violation of her conscience. " We must eat and drink and dress—what can a woman of my age do ? My husband and I deceived each other when

we married: we must bear the consequences of the deception—bear one another and bear the burden of scheming together for to-day's dinner and to-morrow's breakfast—till death divorces us."

We see the result of her righteous effort in a scene between the two other conspirators, Lammle and Fledgeby, when the former reads Podsnap's letter breaking all communication between the two families. The result is, as you know, that these two arrant rascals declare their deal off and Fledgeby demands back the promissory note he has given to Lammle, while he inwardly plots to destroy him. How he does it is no business of ours, but we realise that Fledgeby suspects Sophronia of having had a hand in the affair and Lammle himself is not entirely without suspicion of her double-crossing him. Sophronia herself is terrified lest he discover it, for she is thoroughly frightened of him. To save herself she makes another effort of propitiation, to show she is still working in their combined interests. When an execution is put into their house on a bill of sale, she suggests squeezing money out of the Boffins, as "the richest people we know, and the simplest." They plot to poison the good old couple's mind against Rokesmith and succeed far enough to obtain a cheque for £100. But the Boffins detest them for it and desire to see no more of them. The old boy says so in unequivocal terms:

"You have done me a service, a very good service, and I have paid for it . . . very good. We hope (my old lady and me) that you'll give us credit for taking the plainest and honestest shortcut that could be taken under the circumstances—so, wishing you well in the way you go, we will now conclude with the observation that perhaps you'll go it."

The boot, plain and simple! But as Mr. Lammle rose, with an impudent laugh, on his side of the table and Mrs. Lammle rose with a disdainful form on hers, a hasty foot is heard on the staircase and Georgiana Podsnap rushes in to embrace her dear good friend Sophronia, with a rush of sympathetic tears, and offer all the cash she has at command, and a valuable necklace, to help pay their debts.

"Oh, Mr. and Mrs. Boffin," she cries, "pray forgive me for this intrusion, but you don't know how fond I was of Sophronia when Pa wouldn't let me go there any more, or what I have felt for Sophronia since I heard from Ma of her having been brought low in the world. You don't, you can't, you never can think how I have lain awake at nights and cried for my good Sophronia, my dear and only friend."

She embraces Sophronia warmly and departs. No wonder Sophronia's manner changed and she turned extremely pale; "directing one appealing look, first to Mr. Boffin and then to Mrs. Boffin" who understood her instantly and took charge of the necklace. "I'll take care" said the Golden Dustman, "that these are soon given back." And then Sophronia pleads, without daring to look at him: "You will not undeceive her, I hope, Mr. Boffin."

"No," said Mr. Boffin.

"I mean as to the worth and value of her friend," the poor woman begs, and Boffin reassures her. She thanks them both.

" Sophronia," asks her husband, mockingly, " are you sentimental ? " He goes on : " Because I'm disposed to be sentimental myself on your appropriation of the money and jewels, Mr. Boffin. As our little Georgiana says, three five pound notes are better than nothing and if you sell the necklace you can buy things with the produce."

To which Mr. Boffin's reply is merely " *If* you sell it " as he calmly puts note and necklace in his pocket. Lammle, after a long greedy look at the pocket, turns to his wife and sees tears in her eyes.

" Why, confound the woman ! she *is* sentimental," he cries. Sophronia turns to him coldly and her last words strike the note of tragic desperation.

" You have had no former cause of complaint on the sentimental score, Alfred, and you will have none in future. We go abroad soon with the money we have earned here. There is no fear of my taking any sentiment with me. I should soon be eased of it if I did. But it will be left behind. It *is* left behind. Are you ready, Alfred ? "

They go out and their creator observes : " It might have been fanciful to suppose there was something of the ashamed air of two cheats who were linked together by concealed handcuffs : but, not so, to suppose that they were haggardly weary of one another and of all the world."

When the disposal of their first class furniture and effects (including " a Billiard Table in capital letters ") by auction under a bill of sale, is publicly announced nobody is half so much amazed as Hamilton Veneering, Esq., M.P., for Pocket Breaches, who instantly begins to find out that " The Lammles are the only people ever entered on his soul's register who are not the oldest and dearest friends he has in the world." And thus ends for us the silent drama of Sophronia. There is nothing actively dramatic in it, but it is none the less poignant for that.

Our Mutual Friend is, indeed, rich in such soul dramas. We have another in Bella Wilfer's inward struggle between love and the lust for wealth. " Contradictory thing," she tells herself, " but my life and fortunes are so contradictory altogether that what can I expect myself to be ? " She is, like Richard Carson, the victim of a dazzling lure and perhaps of heredity as her mother is such an arrant snob.

In Rokesmith, again, we have an inner battle between two selves. You may read this in Chapter XIII called " A Solo and a Duet " where he asks himself whether John Harmon shall come to life or remain dead, and finally resolves that he " shall come back no more." That his final resolve is ultimately reversed is a vital human touch that shows our author to have been a reader of souls, and of the struggles, complexities and contradictions that take place within them. How few of us ever abide by our resolutions or know ourselves ?

> " We that acquaint ourselves with every zone
> And pass both tropics and behold both poles
> When we come home are to ourselves unknown
> And unacquainted still with our own souls."

Dickens lets himself go in this struggle of John Harmon with himself more freely than he does with Sophronia's, for John and Bella are hero and heroine of his story; their separate dramas are bound up together and Bella's better self prevails, to influence John's decision.

But there is another silent battlefield in which Apollyon comes off victor—that of Bradley Headstone, the slave of passion and jealousy, whose soul drama develops into action drama. We cannot doubt that he put up a fight against the enemy within, for we read, after Charlie has upbraided him and left him: "He shrank together on the floor and grovelled there, with the palms of his hands clasping his hot temples, in unutterable misery and unrelieved by a single tear."

Indeed, I think we may conclude that in none of his novels has Dickens so much of this silent drama as in *Our Mutual Friend*. Almost every character in it seems to be engaged in an inward struggle. Eugene Wrayburn wrestles between love and pride of birth; Old Riah wrestles between his conscience and fear of Fledgeby. The Golden Dustman himself is not free from "inward strife." And I have shown, in another paper,* how Twemlow, Knight of the Simple Heart, fought against his natural timidity for what his conscience told him was right.

Of course we all realise that action drama must generally be preceded by this soul drama, though it is only when that action is taken that the inner prelude comes to light. But the skilled dissecter of character can show us the process by which the criminal arrives at his crime, as well as the way in which heart and conscience triumph over passion. The sinner is not always a wrestler with evil; there are instances of natural turpitude and degeneration, such as we find in a Fledgeby, a Quilp or a Bill Sikes whose shrivelled souls can form no battle-ground for Apollyon to fight with the angels of God. But I think Dickens realised that such instances are rare, as monsters are rare, and that generally the sinner has an inner fight before he sins.

We have such a case in John Jasper, whose soul is laid bare to us in one or two strong scenes; the only dramatic scenes we have, for the action drama does not take place before our eyes. I think Dickens never intended that it should. In one of these scenes—when he hears that his crime (of which I think there can no longer be any doubt) was unnecessary to rid him of a rival, his agony is laid bare for us from the following sentences:

"Mr. Grewgious saw a staring white face and two quivering white lips in the easy chair, and saw two muddy hands gripping its sides . . ."

"Mr. Gewgious saw a lead-coloured face in the easy chair and on its surface dreadful starting drops and bubbles, as if of steel . . ."

"Mr. Grewgious saw a ghastly figure rise, open mouthed, from the easy chair and lift its outspread hands towards his head . . ."

"Mr. Grewgious saw the ghastly figure throw back its head, clutch its hair and turn, with a writhing action before him."

And then, when he had said "this young couple parted, not without tears and sorrow, on the evening when you last saw them together,"

* *The Dickensian*, 1926, page 16.

he heard "a terrible shriek and saw no ghastly figure, sitting or standing; saw nothing but a heap of torn and miry clothes upon the floor."

There we have clearly the climax of a hidden drama, the tragedy of a weak, undisciplined character: and it is quite obvious that Mr. Grewgious sees it as clearly. But we get another glimpse of it in the opium den, when Jasper replies to the old hag there "with a passionate setting of his teeth." . . . "Yes I came on purpose. When I could not bear my life I came to get relief and I got it." "It *was* one—it *was* one." And then: "The journey's made—it's over—it's over."

It is almost too poignant, this dissection of a soul. "Torn by belligerent minds at mutual strife," as if "the god in him had taken unto wife a daughter of the pit." For we cannot doubt that there was good in John Jasper, and a conscience to be violated. Compared with this glimpse of emotional suffering, the film version of *Edwin Drood* with its skeleton in the crypt, seems theatrical and feeble. I am not surprised that some people think *Drood* would have been Dickens's greatest work, could he have lived to finish it.

I have not space to set down at length other such dramas to be found in every novel by Dickens; but no doubt they will occur to the reader. There is that of Lady Dedlock for one, whose mental suffering and emotional drama ends only with her death; and that of Pip, in *Great Expectations*, who wrestles with his horror of the convict against his sense of the gratitude he ought to feel to one who has done everything for his welfare and risked his life to be near him.

"Nothing was needed but this; the wretched man, after loading wretched me with his gold and silver chains for years, had come to me and I held him there in my keeping! If I loved him instead of abhorring him; if I had been attracted to him by the strongest admiration and affection, instead of shrinking from him with the strongest repugnance, it could have been no worse. On the contrary, it would have been better, for his preservation would then have naturally tenderly addressed my heart, `he cried in his first shock and horror, as he sat down by his fire, afraid to go to bed.' For an hour or two I felt too stunned to think and it was not until I began to think that I began fully to know how wrecked I was, how the ship in which I had sailed had gone to pieces."

One can feel sympathy with the poor boy thus tied to one he believed to be a murderer.

We have another such struggle in David Copperfield's love and abhorrence for Steerforth; and there is the same hidden drama to be found in the two Dombeys, a man and woman who are not without good qualities, both wrestling with pride against their better instincts.

In short there is no novel that Dickens ever wrote in which we do not find these silent dramas of the human spirit underlying the action drama, the surface plot and story. It gives our novelist his depth and shows us how, by the power of his imaginative sympathy and genius, he is able to reach the mysterious inhabitant "in this clay carcase crippled," the wayward, warring human soul.

FATHER AND DAUGHTER*

By J. W. T. LEY

"I ASSURE you I am very human," said Charles Dickens in one of his speeches. Whatever I have written about him—and I have been writing about him for forty years—I have always written in the light of that statement. But now I read in Miss Storey's book that Dickens's daughter said "My father was a wicked man—a very wicked man." All I can say is that the statement is utterly untrue. It was made during Mrs. Perugini's declining years, and to repeat it in a book of this sort is to do both father and daughter grave injustice.

It is difficult to know how to approach this—as I think—unnecessary book. In what I shall write I shall probably invoke the sneers of certain people, but I will write honestly; my immediate reaction was that the book showed Mrs. Perugini in a not very worthy light. Upon reflection it still is my reaction. Having known her, having read so many of her public tributes to her father, I can only wish that she had written the record herself, and not left it to a friend very much younger than herself to publish posthumously.

As Mrs. Perugini grew older her conscience haunted her. She felt that justice ought to be done to her mother. She felt that the whole truth ought to be told. It is on record that she did actually write the story, intending to deposit it with the British Museum for publication fifty years after her death. Then she altered her mind and destroyed the MS. Still, as she grew older and more infirm this so late-awakened conscience pressed her and she asked the author of this book to see that the world was told the story.

I do not want to seem captious, but the fact remains that practically everything Miss Storey writes is what she has been told. And I do think it a sound doctrine that so serious a task as that of relating incidents in a great man's life at second-hand, sixty-nine years after his death, is something not to be lightly undertaken.

I have no intention of shirking the fact that the main purpose of this book is to confirm the story that I so much doubted—as to which I am not even now wholly convinced—that the immediate cause of Dickens's separation from his wife was that he fathered a child by young Ellen Ternan. Now, let us believe the story and then ask why it was never related until after the death of Sir Henry Dickens? The answer is "out of consideration for Dickens's children." Yes! but Mrs. Perugini was anxious that the world should be told. When all who knew anybody connected with Dickens would be dead, she greatly desired that this story should be related, and that the world should be told that her father was a very wicked man who treated his wife shamefully. I should have honoured her memory more if she had carried out her first intention and given the world the story while she was here to witness its truth.

* "Dickens and Daughter," by Gladys Storey. Illustrated. 10*s.* 6*d.* Frederick Muller, Ltd.

We have heard so much about reticence for the sake of Dickens's children, that I am concerned to ask if Ellen Ternan's children were not also entitled to consideration. What are likely to be the feelings of a daughter, who loved a devoted mother, when she reads this book or reviews of it? I caused all this to be put to Miss Storey several months ago. Let it be said, however, that this portion of the book is introduced quite unobtrusively and not " splashed " in the letterpress nor in the advertisements. But I hold very strongly that Mrs. Perugini's original intention of holding the whole story back till fifty years after her death should have been adhered to.

Miss Storey's book consists of anecdotes of famous people, many details, of interest mainly to ultra-Dickensians, about the careers of Dickens's children, and attacks on her father's memory by a daughter whose conscience seems to have become more and more alive as her physical strength declined.

We are told that after the separation life at Gad's Hill was hell; was it? Mamie never suggested that it was; Sir Henry never said so—and please do not reply that he was much too young to understand. He was 22 when his father died, and at Oxford, and undergraduates of that age and of his intelligence are neither ignorant, nor innocent, nor unobservant. The statement even goes so far as that Katey married Charles Collins, whom she never loved—indeed, it was never a marriage in the true sense—in order to get away from the miseries of home. Accept all this as true and may we be excused for wondering why Mrs. Perugini in her old age should have wished to reproach herself for not seeing her mother oftener? She was married two years after the separation. Her mother lived seventeen years after that. Why could not Katey visit her mother as she liked? Because they were all so dominated by their father, is the reply we are given, and frankly, I cannot accept it at all. She was a married woman, not living under her father's domination. Let me be fair, though, and say that I know she nursed her mother devotedly during the last painful illness.

We are told that Miss Georgina Hogarth once said that Katey was intolerant. In reply to which Katey says " Aunty was not quite straight, and I often stood up to her; *that* is why she called me intolerant."

I have no doubt whatsoever that Katey was an intolerant young lady. " My father," she is here recorded as saying, " was with all his greatness, what Aunty called me—intolerant." Dickens was certainly a dominating character and he was intolerant of many things. I put it to my readers, " study this book and say if you do not believe Katey was intolerant also." At the time of the separation she was not yet of age. She undoubtedly had a Bella Wilfer tongue; she betrayed her intolerance in letters. We are told in this book that on one occasion it cost her £50 to buy-in a letter of hers which was to be put up at auction, because it contained a reference to someone which—well, the only inference is that it was libellous. At one of the last meetings between her and Miss Storey—the meeting at which she said " my father was

a very wicked man "—she also said " I wish I had never been born. I am glad now that my little boy did not live, for he would probably have inherited all my faults."

Such hell as she suffered was self-created.

Dickens boiled his domestic troubles down to nine words : " Catherine and I are not made for each other." That, in my opinion, sums up the basis of the whole matter. There are many to-day who see effects, and mistake them—gloatingly in some cases—for causes. I hold that undoubted incompatibility was the fundamental *cause* of the trouble (it had existed for twenty years), and I believe the match which ignited the bonfire, so to speak, was the receipt of that letter from Mrs. Winter (Maria Beadnell), his first and only real love. It awakened memories that had lain dormant since long before Dickens's marriage. He met her and was disillusioned, but that letter had awakened dreams of what " might have been." Henceforward he was unsettled. On the other hand I have no hesitation in saying that the real " fly in the domestic ointment " was Georgina Hogarth. I believe that Mrs. Dickens resented the continual presence and the ever-growing influence of her sister. He had tried to keep the skeleton in the cupboard, but by now his wife had reached the most trying time of life ; she was in a perpetual state of resentment at the presence in the house of Georgina and also, I believe, at the influence exercised by John Forster. Dickens was also now less able to control himself and suddenly his dreams of the Maria Beadnell that never was assumed bodily form in the shape of Ellen Ternan. She was not the real cause of the trouble ; she was simply a circumstance arising from the trouble. The culmination must have come in any case ; her appearance only speeded it.

When Maria jilted him, he, full of self pity, had found a pretty girl (Catherine Hogarth) ready to listen to his tale of woe and he rushed unreflectingly into marriage with her.

It was, he said, after the birth of his second child that the trouble began. From then on, he plainly hinted, his wife was at times not mentally stable. I am not discussing the propriety of his telling the world all this, for I believe that when he did so he himself was not in a state of mental stability, but there is strong corroborative evidence of it. I have already pointed out two references to mental trouble in Catherine.* Have not these a very definite importance ? They were contained in letters that he wrote to her not very long before their marriage.

The finishing touch was applied by Mrs. Dickens's mother and sister, who so influenced her with their poisonous whisperings, that she, never strong in character, could not forgive him.

Is it believable, that most of Dickens's friends were quite ignorant of the trouble in his home ? Strange, is it not, that the most unqualified tribute to Dickens's nobility of character and absolute purity of mind, should have come from Ellen Ternan's own brother-in-law ? How do those who are so anxious to see all the faults in him account for it ? Carlyle must have known the truth ; he wrote of " the good, the gentle,

" Dickens and His Wife," by J. W. T. Ley, *The Dickensian*, 1935, pp. 226–229.

kindhearted, ever friendly, noble Dickens ; every inch of him an honest man." Marcus Stone grew up with Dickens's children ; he was, after his father's death, practically a member of the family, and was grown up when the crisis came. Can it be doubted that he knew that things were wrong ? Yet he declared to me that " Charles Dickens was the best man I have ever known. He was so good that you put his greatness into second place when you knew him."

Men and women who knew the household well never abated their regard for Dickens, even after the publication of his " Statement " and the " Violated Letter." Nearly all of them paid noble tribute to him in print. Only one friend parted from him—Mark Lemon—and that was through Dickens's feeling of resentment because Lemon refused to publish the " Statement " in " Punch."

Yet his daughter, at the very end of her life, nearly seventy years after the trouble, says he treated her mother badly and was a very wicked man ! It does not ring true.

Of course I am sorry this book has been written. If the truth had to be told, it should have been told at first hand by some one with knowledge of the parties concerned, as well as of the facts.

A UNIQUE DICKENS COLLECTION

THE Chicago Branch recently had the great pleasure in visiting the library of Mr. S. B. Bradford at Ottawa, charmingly situated overlooking the confluence of the Fox and Illinois rivers. Mr. Bradford not only possesses a complete set of first editions of the works and every book of Dickens that has ever been written, but he has made a special hobby of collecting every known illustration of the works. These, together with the text itself, he has inlaid to quarto size. *Pickwick* runs into no less than fourteen volumes, and so far he has 160 volumes containing over six thousand different illustrations. The binding is of red leather, and uniform, and as the volumes are of the loose leaf type, they permit of additions from time to time. As the limit to Dickens illustrators appears to be inexhaustible, this plan is admirable.

A LOSS TO PITTSBURGH

THE Pittsburgh Branch has suffered a great loss in the passing of their President, Mrs. Sarah C. Pettit, a well-known writer of plays and short stories. She and her sister have for many years written the annual play performed by the branch ; she took a part in the last one, an adaptation of *Bleak House*, only a month before her death.

The July " Kipling Journal " reprints, by permission, from *The Dickensian* for June 1936, Miss Tylee's poem on the " three wizards," who " lie in Westminster." The Editor of that Journal received the lines from the Victoria B. C. Branch of the Kipling Society.

OLIVER IN HOLLYWOOD

A NEW YEAR'S EVE FANTASY

BY GEORGE J. SCHAFFER

I WAS standing on Vine Street, just below Hollywood Boulevard, when a half-grown boy turned the corner and collided with a comely young woman who was just passing me. After a moment's confusion and abject apologies on his part, the young man stepped aside and started to pass on, when, with a startled exclamation, the young lady said, " Why, Oliver Twist, what brings you here, and where did you come from ? "

At the same moment the boy, having taken a closer look, said, " Is it really you, Nancy, and may I ask you the same questions without seeming impertinent ? "

" Oliver," continued the girl, " the last time I saw you you were starting on a little er—expedition."

" And," countered Oliver, " the last time I heard of you, you had just been "—and here Oliver blushed and hesitated, so Nancy finished the sentence for him, " murdered by Bill. Sure, everybody knows that, so why should you be flustered about mentioning it ? "

Still both of them seemed puzzled, as tho' not able to grasp the situation, until Nancy happened to see a streamer across the Boulevard, " HOLLYWOOD GREETINGS FOR NEW YEAR, 1939."

" Why," she said, " I thought this was *1839*, and I wondered how I had got into this city. Guess there's only one explanation, Oliver, we've been what they call ' reincarnated ' and come back to earth a hundred years later. This must be America. And this is Hollywood ! "

At this juncture a big policeman seized each of them by the arm. " Come along with me," he said, " holiday shoppers are not safe in the Boulevard with the likes of you parading about."

Oliver began to protest, saying he had done nothing wrong and that he did not want to be thrown into a filthy cell with a lot of drunks and criminals, remembering his visit to Old Bailey.

" Well, I don't know much about *you*," said the officer, " but we do know this Nancy Sikes, at least by reputation, and we've been watching for her. So, if you are with her you are in bad company and like enough just as bad, so come along and tell it to the judge in the morning."

Oliver began to protest, when Nancy leaned over and whispered, " Don't be afraid Oliver. Come along, they don't treat them here like in the jails and workhouses in London in the old days. You will have a clean bed, perhaps better than you have had for a long time."

All three stepped into the police auto and a few minutes later were entering the Hollywood Police Station. There Nancy was delivered into the care of the matron and Oliver into the care of the officer in charge of boy prisoners ; and both had a comfortable night.

In the morning both were taken to the Georgia Street Detention Home for juveniles, adjoining the Georgia Street Hospital, and both were well fed. At both stations they were questioned, and police

reports were made on their cases to the Juvenile Court for use when their cases came up to be heard along with the reports of the deputy probation officers.

Oliver seemed to be as badly off in this incarnation as in the previous one, as he could tell nothing about his parents or home. All he could say was that he had run away from an orphan asylum, just as in the old days he had run away from the workhouse and Mr. Bumble, the beadle.

But there was something different here from the old days. There was no charge against him of any crime or offence. There was a petition filed FOR him and NOT against him, merely telling the circumstances of his arrest; that he was homeless and that he wished to submit himself to such order as the court might deem proper so that he might have proper protection in a good home.

It will be remembered that Oliver was very ill and weak when brought before the magistrate, Mr. Fang, and how brutally he was treated by the court. Again he was undernourished and half ill; but how differently Judge Scott handled his case in our Los Angeles Juvenile Court. The hearing was private and the judge saw at once that Oliver needed nourishing food and medical attention. He ordered that Oliver be sent to the Juvenile Hall Clinic for at least a week's observation and care before he would dispose of his case.

There were 4,776 children sent there for such care last year.

There he was bathed, given clean clothes, and put into a clean, warm bed, such as he had hardly ever known in all his life. And most marvellous of all, as it seemed to him, he was fed with what the nurse called "Egg-nog." When he later told Nancy about the egg-nog, she smacked her lips and asked what it had in it, rum or sherry? When Oliver told her that the nurse had told him it was nothing but eggs, milk, and sugar, Nancy's enthusiasm waned somewhat.

Later a good home was found for Oliver on a fruit and poultry ranch in the San Fernando Valley, where he was kindly treated and well fed. As soon as he was strong enough, he was glad indeed to do his fair share of the work, saying that he had never been so happy in all his life, never dreaming there could be such a place and hoping that he never would have to leave it. Every month he was called upon by two separate deputy probation officers from the Court, who reported very favourably on Oliver and his new home.

As Oliver grew older, he began to take an interest in these kindly probation deputies and their work under the Juvenile Court, realising that they were doing a great service for boys like him. He told them he wanted to know more about it and hoped that some day he might be a part of it so that he could help other boys as he had been helped. So, after talking with him several times, they loaned him a copy of the Chief Probation Officer's Annual Report, and these are some of the things he read and told Nancy about later on:

"Why, would you believe it, Nancy, they don't send boys and girls to prison for years or hang them or send them to penal colonies for life, as they did Lummy Jack, for stealing a gold snuff box, even

when they admit stealing or other crimes. They don't even call them criminals, but speak of them as maladjusted children, and have them treated by special kinds of doctors with funny names, until they grow out of the desire to do wrong in most cases. But in the main, it seems that the fact that someone is interested in them; in making their own home and surroundings better; or if that cannot be done, in providing another home; in providing playgrounds and sports or other forms of occupying spare time so as to give an outlet in a wholesome way to their youthful energies rather than drifting into idleness and crime in the midst of their poverty. And where the court officers cannot find good private homes, these boys and girls are sent to big homes owned by the State or the County, and in some cases by private welfare or religious societies. Perhaps you and I might call them asylums, Nancy, but these are much better and finer and more home-like, and are managed by men and women who teach them how to behave towards one another and to respect the rights of other people when they go back into the world again; in other words, they show them best how they can be happy and thus better able to restrain their impulses to go wrong.

" Some of these private welfare and religious society homes are for Jewish children, some for Catholics and some for Protestants, care being taken in the state homes not to interfere with the religious predilections of the child, if any.

" Then California has a number of ' Institutions,' as they are called, and not ' prisons ; ' where older boys and girls are sometimes sent until they can get ' adjusted,' if the judge feels that the boy or girl is not quite sure of himself for any reason; or if the judge believes that stricter discipline is needed. Then when released, the probation officer visits and advises with him.

" However, most of these boys and girls that come into court are sent back home, if the home is fit to go to, as home and neighborhood are felt to have the best influence in stabilizing them. Last year, nearly half out of 4,000 were sent home. If the homes are unfit, they are sent to private homes where the county pays their board as was done with 800 last year. Some go back to their homes in other states and some join the Army or Navy. Those needing it, are sent to hospitals or insane asylums for the proper treatment.

" At the beginning of 1935, the court had 3,896 cases on hand, to which 3,751 were added during the year, or a total of 7,647 boys and girls.

" Just think, Nancy, judges and policemen are trying to help boys and girls to go straight instead of locking them up in filthy prisons with bad men and women to become regular criminals.

" By the end of 1935, nearly 2,800 had been discharged by the court as needing no further supervision by the court or deputies.

" And, Nancy," continued Oliver, " there is a number of fine men and women who give much of their time without pay, to looking after these state homes. Then, besides the Juvenile Court Judge and his assistants of Commissioner and their stenographers, there is the Chief

Probation Officer and his staff, of over 208 office and field workers all engaged in a sympathetic way and trained manner in helping adults, as well as these boys and girls.

" Do you know, Nancy, the Artful Dodger wasn't a bad fellow, and if he had been given a chance like this, might never have ' gone abroad ' for life. But he came into court again and again for there was none to look after him. Here, because there is someone to look after them 71 per cent, are never in court again.

" But it's curious," he went on, " that those who come into the Juvenile Court, come mostly from the poverty-stricken sections of Los Angeles, just as the boys and girls in London in the old days came from Whitechapel and other poverty stricken parts of that city."

" Sure," replied Nancy, " what with drunkenness and no decent place to live, half starved all the time and with the police chasing them wherever they tried to play, there was nothing to do but get into mischief in secret."

" And," went on Oliver, " the records of the Juvenile Court show that two-thirds of all these children come from poor homes or those depending on charity. Many children go hungry and both old and young develop consumption because of these conditions. Think of it, Nancy, here in wealthy America, where the farmers grow more than all the people could possibly eat—here where 513 people have enough income to buy all the wheat and corn raised in America, and yet, in this rich state of California, little children, and big folks too, go hungry ! "

" You're telling me," said Nancy.

" 68 per cent. of all these boys and girls have no church connections whatever. Perhaps it is for that reason the Probation Officer says in his report : ' The church, which for years has professed its interest and concern over the weak and helpless, has in the past almost turned its back upon these unfortunate children. They are not invited. They are too dirty, uncouth, and wild. Few are called and few come.' "

" Just like dear old London," commented Nancy, " in fact I never thought of churches trying to help children in this world and I fancy that's what the church thought about it too."

" Much of the trouble with these children," went on Oliver, " seems to be that the parents are not living together, ' broken homes ' they call them, and almost always they are the homes of poverty. I think the record is that only in 1,462 families are the parents living together out of a total of 3,696 cases."

" Sure," said Nancy, " what's a kid going to do with no folks to care for him and tell him right from wrong."

" The dangerous age for both boys and girls is between 13 and 16, with the girls' average being higher than the boys', over 55 per cent. as against 53 per cent. for the boys. There's a nut for you to crack, Nancy.

" That's easy," she replied. " The boys help the girls to go wrong,"

" While I hear many people blame the large amount of crime on the ' foreign element ' as they call them, the records show that more than

70 per cent. are native white born ; the girls lead with 74 per cent. and boys 68 per cent. The Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, and Indians have less than 1 per cent."

" I see here," said Oliver, reading from the Report, " that the Juvenile Police Department of Los Angeles has a large force of carefully trained men and women who handle only children's cases. All such cases are turned over to this department and the officer who makes the arrest on his beat is relieved of further responsibility, as was done in our cases, Nancy.

" Even in the matter of traffic violations by youthful drivers of automobiles, every Saturday (not being a school day), 150 youngsters attend a special school at Belmont High School to receive lessons in driving so as to prevent accidents and to avoid law violations.

" You remember we had an old saying in England, Nancy, that ' an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure ' ? Well, the Juvenile Court and its people are trying to make the public realise that after all, these so-called unadjusted children are neighbourhood problems or a ' community responsibility.' And the Court is meeting with a splendid response through these different groups I have mentioned."

" Well," said Nancy, " I always used to say I never wanted to come back to Earth again, as I had enough trouble when I was here before ; but if these are samples of better conditions for boys and girls, that may lead into better lives for men and women, I am not sorry I came, are you, Oliver ? "

" No, and somehow through the hazy memories of that faraway time in the London of long ago, the name, Charles Dickens, comes to me. Wasn't it he who first told people about you and me and other poor boys and girls, and men and women too for that matter, living in the midst of misery and poverty and suffering injustice ? I have heard that his stories caused many reforms and changes for the better. Somehow I wish he could be here to see these better things for boys and girls. And perhaps he would write some more stories and tell about the sufferings of America that need to be told, in story form so as to reach the mass of the people."

" Me too ! " said Nancy.

WHO SAID THIS?

(*Answers to Questions on page* 226).

1. Mrs. Jiniwin ; 2, Grandfather Trent ; 3, Quilp ; 4, Schoolmaster ; 5, Short ; 6, Little Nell ; 7, Mrs. George ; 8. Dick Swiveller ; 9, Landlord of the Jolly Sandboys ; 10, The Marchioness ; 11, Kit ; 12, Mr Witherden ; 13, Sampson Brass ; 14, George ; 15, Mrs. Jarley ; 16, The furnace watcher ; 17, Quilp ; 18, Preacher at Little Bethel.

THE EMPTY CHAIR

Two copies of this famous engraving are for sale at the Dickens House, price 10*s*. 6*d*. each.

NEAR AKIN—LAMB AND DICKENS

By F. C. DANCE

I.

BETWEEN Charles Lamb and our own particular Charles there is a strong intellectual as well as spiritual affinity, with some striking divergences of character and outlook. They were not, strictly speaking, contemporaries, Lamb belonged to an earlier generation and ended his career and his life about the time when Dickens was sharpening his literary pencil—as it were—and beginning to write those early fugitive sketches which were the forerunners of the greater works upon which his fame is for ever based. There is a certain kinship between them and I start my comparison with that divine gift of humour, which they both possessed in large measure. Their other qualities were many and diverse, but humour is a faculty which makes a first appeal to most of us.

Lamb's humour was whimsical, playful, kindly, and always delightful; a humour of the intellect and of the heart. But it would be wrong to think of him merely or mainly as a humorist; his mind was complex and often puzzling. He was in essence serious and could be grave, critical and discriminating; but through much if not all his writings, humour is delicately interwoven.

Dickens's humour was generally broader. He excelled over all other writers in the creation of those quaint and grotesque characters, sometimes exaggerated, into which he seemed to breathe the very breath of life, and to make them as vivid and vital as himself. But he did not stop at the grotesque—in that multiplicity of characters; he struck every chord in the gamut of human emotion.

Lamb and Dickens were, like Dr. Johnson, urban-minded, looking with loving and tolerant eyes on the conglomerate mass of humanity which makes up the life of a great city. This was particularly true of Lamb, to whom sylvan scenes made but an imperfect appeal. Writing to Wordsworth he says: "The lighted shops of the Strand and Fleet Street, the innumerable trades, tradesmen and customers, coaches, waggons, playhouses, all the bustle and wickedness round about Covent Garden. The wonder of these sights impels me into night walks about the crowded streets, and I often shed tears in the motley Strand from fulness of joy at so much life."

Both were humanists with a deep and lasting love of mankind, with an understanding of, and sympathy with, the least fortunate of their fellows—the "under dog," the chimney sweep, and the beggar—though they looked at social questions from different angles. Lamb was, as Leigh Hunt said, "a humanist in the most universal sense of the term, he had felt, thought, and suffered so much that he had literally intolerance for nothing, but when he supposed the sympathies of men who might have known better, to be imperfect. He was little concerned with the theoretical or transcendental. He was only at his ease in the arms of humanity and she loved and comforted him

like one of her wisest and weakest children." Despite his all-embracing sympathy he loved and accepted the world as he found it.

Dickens was doubtless made of sterner stuff. He looked at the world with the eye of the reformer. He did not say with Hamlet "The world is out of joint, Oh ! cursed spite, that ever I was born to set it right." But when he contemplated "The oppressors wrong, the proud man's contumely, the law's delay, the insolence of office and the spurns that patient merit of the unworthy take," he was aroused to passionate indignation. He never lost faith in common humanity nor grew weary of fighting its battle.

Lamb and Dickens had another taste in common, both loved the stage and all things theatrical, and numbered among their friends some of the leading players of their respective days. Dickens among his many brilliant gifts, had histrionic talents of a high order and was acclaimed as one of the finest amateur actors of his generation.

Lamb in his youth had, like Dickens, a fleeting idea of adopting the stage as a profession, but, realising his physical and vocal limitations (he suffered all his life from a slight impediment in his speech) abandoned the project. He wrote plays, though not with much success, but his descriptions and criticisms of the contemporary stage, plays and players, are amongst the most discriminating and fascinating writings to be found on the subject.

II.

Charles Lamb was by birth and choice a Londoner. He was born on February 19th, 1775, at the Temple.

From his father, Scrivener, servant and assistant to Samuel Salt, a Bencher of the Inner Temple, he probably inherited his literary proclivities, for he was in the way of being a bookman, with a marked capacity for versifying. Lamb held his father's talents in high esteem : but the son's far transcended those of his sire whose name would probably never have emerged from obscurity if it had not been for his son.

In 1782 he was entered as a scholar at Christ's Hospital (The Blue Coat School) where he remained for nine years. He then obtained a clerkship at South Sea House but the following year entered the East India House, where he worked for nearly 33 years in the Accomptants Department and retired in 1825 on a pension of £450 a year. He lived after his retirement for nine years and died in 1834, not having quite completed his sixtieth year.

Lamb's life was not altogether devoid of romance. In early life he cherished an affection for a girl named Anne Simmonds, afterwards referred to as Alice W. in his essays, but the romance was short-lived as objection was made to the insanity which undoubtedly existed in the Lamb family. So the lovers parted; but the memory persisted and years afterwards Lamb, in that exquisitely tender essay, "Dream Children," imagines his early passion realised.

When 44 years of age, he entertained a tender passion for Fanny Kelly, the actress. He had the greatest admiration for her talents

and esteem for her character. He wrote some eulogistical criticisms of her acting, and afterwards made a formal offer of marriage by letter; she refused him also by letter. He accepted his fate with stoical good humour.

His life was over-shadowed by a great tragedy. His sister Mary, who was 11 years his senior and to whom he was devotedly attached, was subject to recurrent attacks of insanity. In one of these, in a frenzy, she attacked and killed her mother. She was for a period confined to a lunatic asylum. She recovered and, upon her brother undertaking to look after her, was liberated. When in complete mental health Mary Lamb was a woman who was regarded with esteem and affection by a large circle of friends, was an authoress of no mean capacity, a fitting intellectual companion of her brother whom she assisted in his literary work, collaborating with him in the still read "Tales from Shakespeare."

III.

When we contemplate the quantity, quality, and variety of Lamb's literary output, it may surprise us when we remember that during the greater part of his life he was earning his living as a clerk at India House and devoting such time that he could spare from this avocation to reading and contributing to various periodicals. For the nine years of his retirement he was able to follow the bent of his mind. As a poet or playwright he is little remembered, but as a literary critic he occupies a place in the very front rank. He made a special study of dramatic poets who lived in the time of Shakespeare, Marlowe, Dekker, Massinger, Beaumont, and Fletcher; all these and others he rescued from the obscurity into when they had sunk.

But he will for ever be chiefly remembered by that classical series which he wrote under the pen name of Elia and on these his fame is firmly established. They are largely autobiographical and through every page they reveal the personality of their author. Into them he poured the full fruits of his genius. They are illuminated with a fanciful humour and often with a restrained and delicate pathos. We see many portrait sketches of his friends, acquaintances, and relations, sometimes thinly disguised under fictitious names and sometimes with no attempt at disguise at all. Many of them are masterpieces of miniature portraiture and often his characters have a distinctly Dickensian flavour, or we should think so if they had been written at a later date.

Here is a short extract from his essay, "Captain Jackson":

> "The Captain was a retired half-pay officer with a wife and two grown up daughters whom he maintained with the port and notions of gentlewomen upon that slender professional allowance. Comely girls they were, too."
>
> "And was I in danger of forgetting this man? his cheerful suppers—the noble tone of hospitality when first you set your foot in the cottage—the anxious ministering about you where little or nothing (God knows) was to be ministered. The power of self enchantment by which his magnificent wishes to entertain you, he multiplied his means to bounties. 'You saw with your bodily eyes indeed what

seemed a bare scrag—cold servings from the foregone meal—remnant hardly sufficient to send a mendicant from the door contented. But in the copious will—the revelling imagination of your host—the 'mind, the mind, Master Shallow' whole beeves were spread before you—no end appeared to the profusion. It was the widow's cruse—the loaves and fishes; carving could not lessen nor helping diminish it—the stamina were left—the elemental bone still flourished divested of its accidents. 'Let us live while we can' methinks I hear the open handed creature exclaim; 'while we have let us not want' 'there is plenty left' 'want for nothing'—with many more such hospitable sayings, the spurs of appetite and old concomitants of smoking boards and feast oppressed chargers. Then sliding a slender ratio of Single Gloucester upon his wife's plate or his daughters', he would convey the remanent rind into his own, with a merry quirk of 'the nearer the bone' &c., and declaring that he universally preferred the outside. Wine we had none, nor, except on very rare occasions, spirits, but the sensation of wine was there. Some thin kind of ale I remember—'British beverage' he would say 'Push about my boys,' 'Drink to your sweethearts girls.' At every meagre draught a toast must ensue or a song. All forms of good liquor were there and none of its effects wanting. Shut your eyes and you would swear a capacious bowl of punch was foaming in the centre with beams of generous Port or Madeira radiating to it from each of the table corners. You got flustered without knowing whence; tipsy upon words; and reeled under the potency of his unperforming Bacchanalian encouragements."

No person of the name of Jackson is to be found amongst Lamb's friends, so the cognomen chosen is obviously fictitious. Can his real name, I wonder, have been Micawber?

It is to the lasting honour and glory of Lamb that, like Dickens, he took the so-called commonplace and insignificant things of life, turned the lamp of his genius upon them and shewed them to be the important and interesting things that they really are.

These two lovers of their kind, by their works and by their lives, earned the love and gratitude of their contemporaries; and our love and our gratitude and the love and gratitude of generations still to come.

FRIENDS OF THE DICKENS HOUSE

A NUMBER of loyal Dickensians have recently inaugurated a society of "Friends of the Dickens House," the members of which promise to subscribe annually sums which are small individually, but which in the aggregate will relieve the Trustees of much financial anxiety.

Doubtless there are many more who will willingly subscribe an annual sum to swell the total; so that the Trustees may build up a reserve and not feel hampered by the paradox of museums, that the richer they are in exhibits the poorer they are in revenue.

Will all who are interested please write to the Dickens House so that we may become "Mutual Friends" in the true Dickens sense.

THE DICKENS ORCHESTRA

By DOROTHY A. MONRO

DICKENS was a great lover of music. The waves of the sea sang to him, the cricket on the hearth chirped for him, the clocks talked to him, and the chimes told him stories. He made the bells say to Toby Veck :

> " Toby Veck, Toby Veck, keep a good heart, Toby !
> Toby Veck, Toby Veck, keep a good heart, Toby ! "

When times were bad, very bad indeed ; almost at their worst—they said :

> " Toby Veck, Toby Veck, job coming soon, Toby !
> Toby Veck, Toby Veck, job coming soon, Toby ! "

The world was ever present to Dickens, and the sad deep music of humanity found in his heart responsive chords of love and sympathy. And so he called one of his greatest books a " Carol," and the *Christmas Carol* has sung its way into the hearts of countless thousands with its message of love and good fellowship.

A survey of Dickens's books discloses quite an array of goodly musicians—in fact, enough to form a Dickens Orchestra. We find violins, harps, guitars, pianos, flutes, a fife, a clarinet, and a bassoon mentioned.

As a musical family, the Micawbers, I think, may safely be said to head the list. Mr. Micawber senior led the chorus of " Gee up Dobbin " in the King's Bench Prison, and sang other ditties at the dinner party in David Copperfield's rooms.

Mrs. Micawber was famous for her singing of " The Dashing White Sergeant," when she lived at home with her parents, and it was her vocal ability which won for her a husband, for as Mr. Micawber told David Copperfield, when he heard her sing she attracted his attention to an extraordinary degree and he resolved " to win that woman, or perish in the attempt."

From parents thus gifted, Wilkins Micawber, junior, inherited his " remarkable head voice." The ambitions formed for him, however, were not realised. " It was my hope when I came here," said Mr. Micawber, " to have got Wilkins into the Church ; or perhaps I shall express my meaning more strictly if I say the Choir. But there was no vacancy for a tenor in the venerable Pile for which this city is so justly eminent ; and he has—in short—he has contracted a habit of singing in public houses rather than in sacred edifices."

Among the professional musicians of Dickens's, perhaps the most outstanding is John Jasper, who held the post of Lay Precentor in Cloisterham Cathedral, leader of the boys' choir, and choir soloist. Frederick Dorrit can also be mentioned as a professional musician. He had been a very indifferent musical amateur in his better days, and when misfortune befell him, he endeavoured to support himself by " playing a clarinet as dirty as himself, in a small theatre orchestra. He had been

in that place six nights a week for many years, but had never been observed to raise his eyes above his music book. The carpenters had a joke that he was dead without being aware of it."

Among amateur musicians we find that both Miss Larkins and Scrooge's niece played the harp, as did also Rosa Dartle, who became a being transformed as she played and sang. David tells us : " There was something fearful in the reality of it. It was as if it had never been written or set to music, but sprung out of the passion within her."

When Steerforth touched her, the spell was broken, and in sudden fury she struck him and burst out of the room. But under music's charm she had been " an angel, for a little while."

Caddy Jellyby found her knowledge of the piano useful after she had married a dancing-master, while Mr. Bucket, the detective in *Bleak House*, had played the fife when a boy, " not in a scientific manner but by ear." Mr. Wardle will be remembered for his singing of a Christmas carol, " I care not for Spring on his fickle wing," in a good, round, sturdy voice, his musical efforts adding much to the pleasure of the Dingley Dell party.

Of Dickens's flute players, the one who stands out most clearly is Mr. Mell. It must have been quite an experience to watch Mell play for when he took his flute and played upon it, it looked as though " he would gradually blow his whole being into the large hole at the top, and ooze away at the keys."

No music, we are sure, ever sounded so sweet to David Copperfield as the enchanting French ballads which Dora sang, which were generally to the effect that " whatever was the matter we ought always to dance, Ta ra la, Ta ra la ! " These were played on a glorified instrument which resembled a guitar. Such was the effect upon David that he " recoiled from punch . . . retired to bed . . . and got up in a state of complete infatuation."

The most courageous Dickens musician is surely the one-eyed bagman in *Pickwick*, who being asked if he could play the fiddle, replied he had no doubt he could, but he couldn't say for certain because he had never tried.

So they pass before us in fancy, the singers and players on life's stage as Dickens saw them. But one in memory haunts us still, as we see a mild, gentle figure seated at the organ—dear, patient, faithful, Tom Pinch. His lingering touch upon the keys brings sounds of mellow harmony, and tells of a tranquil, happy life. And as in fancy we listen to the swelling strains of the organ, we pause amid the turmoil of our hurried lives, and try as Dickens did, to drink in life's sunshine, and listen to the aeolian music that the wind of God draws from the human heartstrings.

THE PICKWICK PAPERS IN ESPERANTO

Mr. L. Korinna of the Bradford (Yorks) Esperanto Society has commenced the serial publication in Esperanto of *The Pickwick Papers*. It is appearing in the journal " Granda Familio," Groosbeek ap. Nimego, Holland. It is hoped later to publish it in book form.

THE LONG AND THE SHORT OF IT

BEING
SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE TITLES
ORIGINALLY USED
AND OF THOSE
IN MORE COMMON REQUEST
AT THIS PRESENT TIME.
THE WHOLE EMBELLISHED WITH EXAMPLES
TAKEN
FROM THE ORIGINALS

THE titles of Dickens's works are very familiar in our mouths these days, and we are sometimes apt to overlook the fact that they are not always exactly those which Dickens chose for his title pages. This general remark particularly concerns the early novels, for Dickens was no slave to convention, and was not slow in discarding an idea after it had served his purpose, witness the cessation of the extra Christmas Numbers of " All The Year Round."

The selection of an arresting title for the collection of Dickens's already-published articles arranged for by John Macrone in the autumn of 1835 occupied the attention of both author and publisher. Macrone was desirous of something in the alliterative way and apparently suggested " Bubbles from the Brain of Boz." There had actually been a book published the year before by John Murray, called " Bubbles from the Brunnens of Nassau," which had evidently struck Macrone as being a good title, and he suggested this parody on it, but Dickens rejected it, and proposed " Sketches by Boz " ; that title was chosen, with the informative addition of " Illustrative of every-day life and every-day character."

In a little more than three months, a " book illustrative of manners and life in the Country " was proposed by Chapman & Hall, and Dickens was asked to prepare a prospectus for the new publication. This, of course, involved the selection of a title, and we know from Dickens's letter of the 16th February, 1836—published for the first time in *The Dickensian* for December, 1936, that the work was " yet unchristened." That letter promised to supply Chapman & Hall with the prospectus two days later, and in the meantime the title was maturing. It was a cumbersome one, but it looked well on the prospectus :

The Posthumous Papers
of
The Pickwick Club
containing a faithful record of the
Perambulations, Perils, Travels, Adventures, and
Sporting Transactions of the Corresponding Members
Edited by Boz.

" The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club " was certainly a mouthful ; we can visualise Dickens entranced with the word " Posthumous " ; like his father, Mr. Micawber, he had a delight in high sounding words ; and the word posthumous had lately appeared as part of the title of the Memoirs of a certain titled gentleman.

The covers of each monthly part bore the long title as printed above, with the words " Pickwick Club " in bold rustic lettering in the centre (for reproduction of the cover see *The Dickensian*, 1936, page 85). The page headings were, " Posthumous papers of " on the left-hand page, and " The Pickwick Club " on the right-hand page. It was only natural that in conversation, nobody thought of referring to the book by its correct title ; it became " The Pickwick Club Papers," " The Pickwick Club," or simply " Pickwick." Of these, " The Pickwick Club " was the natural shortened title ; it was so announced on each alternate page of the periodical, and as such it was referred to in many of the press notices, which for the sake of brevity discarded the long and correct title. So far as I have been able to ascertain, the title *The Pickwick Papers*, by which the book is now known, was first used by the " Lincoln Gazette " in reviewing the first number on the 19th April, 1836 ; and so it came about that when the book was published complete, towards the end of 1837, the illustrated title page bore the new title " The Pickwick Papers," for the first time, although the printed title page still read " The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club."

There was a return to simplicity with the next book. " Oliver Twist, or the Parish Boy's Progress, by Boz," was its title in the pages of " Bentley's Miscellany " (1837). In the complete publication in three volumes, it still bore the same title, but in the second edition, the title was shortened to " Oliver Twist," and the author's name was given in full. In the third edition (1841) the sub-title again appears—with the name Charles Dickens instead of " Boz."

When this story was re-published in monthly parts (1846) the title was elongated to " The Adventures of Oliver Twist, or The Parish Boy's Progress." This sub-title was dropped from the first Cheap Edition of 1850 and it is by the simple title of " Oliver Twist " that the book is now known.

" The Life and Adventures of," prefixed the name " Nicholas Nickleby " in the title of Dickens's third long story ; but here again, Dickens reverted to the Pickwick days by the addition of a long explanatory title ; in this case it was : " Containing a faithful account of the Fortunes, Misfortunes, Uprisings, Downfallings and complete career of the Nickleby Family."

" The Old Curiosity Shop " was the first of the simple titles adopted by Dickens, but such was his love of something in addition to the proper title of the story, that when the book appeared complete in 1841, the words " A Tale " were incorporated ; likewise, the second story to appear in " Master Humphrey's Clock " was first christened simply " Barnaby Rudge," but on separate publication the words " A Tale of the Riots of 'eighty " were added.

With " Martin Chuzzlewit " (1843) there was a return to the long explanatory title—probably due to the opportunity afforded by the cover design of the monthly parts. It read as follows :

The
Life and Adventures
of
Martin Chuzzlewit
His Relatives, Friends and Enemies.
Comprising
All his Wills and his Ways
With an Historic Record of What He Did,
and What He Didn't:
Showing, moreover,
Who Inherited The Family Plate, Who came in for the Silver Spoons
And Who For the Wooden Ladles
The Whole forming a Complete Key to the
House of Chuzzlewit
Edited by Boz.

As with " Pickwick," the title of the complete book was shortened on the illustrated title page to the one familiar to-day, " Martin Chuzzlewit" with " The Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit " on the regular printed title page. The next two long books, Dombey and Son (1847), and David Copperfield (1849) were the last bearing long titles, but they possessed some peculiarities worthy of notice. " Dombey and Son " departed from the usual course of printing the long title across the top of the left and right pages. " Dombey and Son " appears on each page. The same title, and not the longer one, appears on the printed title page. The long title was reserved for the illustrated title page ; " Dealings with the firm of Dombey & Son, Wholesale, Retail and for Exportation," that being, as a matter of fact, the same long title as appeared on the cover of the monthly parts.

The selection of a title for " David Copperfield " gave not a little trouble to its author. There were first of all four titles—all long ones, introducing the name of a Mr. Mag, and attaching Copperfield and Blunderstone as the names of his dwelling. These were discarded, but within a few days no less than six other titles (with at least two amendments) were submitted to Forster (see Ley's Annotated Forster, Pages 524-5). And then in the end, this was the chosen title :

The
Personal History, Adventures,
Experience, and observation
of
David Copperfield
The Younger
of Blunderstone Rookery
(Which He never meant to be Published on any Account)

The page headings were " The Personal History and Experience " on the left-hand page, and " Of David Copperfield " on the right-hand page.

On the printed title this became shortened to " The Personal History of David Copperfield," and as was almost always the case, the real and lasting short title, " David Copperfield," was given on the illustrated title page.

The remaining long novels had simple and short titles, " Bleak House," " Little Dorrit," " A Tale of Two Cities," " Great Expectations," " Our Mutual Friend," " The Mystery of Edwin Drood." This last title has become shortened into " Edwin Drood," but to Dickens the words " The Mystery of " were an essential part of the title, for, as he remarked to one of his friends, he was writing the *Mystery*, not the *History*, of Edwin Drood.

Of the shorter books, all five Christmas Books had long titles. First there was

A Christmas Carol.
In Prose.
being
A Ghost Story of Christmas.

Then " The Chimes " is described as " A Goblin Story of Some Bells that Rang an Old Year Out and a New Year In." " A Fairy Tale of Home " is the sub-title of " The Cricket on the Hearth." An even simpler sub-title was given to the next Christmas book, " The Battle of Life " ; it was " A Love Story."

We have never really understood why " and The Ghost's Bargain " was added to the title of " The Haunted Man." As it appeared on the title page it reads :

The Haunted Man
and
The Ghost's Bargain.
A Fancy for Christmas-Time.

To some this might appear to refer to two stories. Was it perhaps a printer's error never corrected, and the sub-title should have been " or the Ghost's Bargain " ? W. D.

THE COLLECTORS' SECTION OF THE FELLOWSHIP

Mr. William Miller writes that this section will welcome new members. The next meeting is on September 29th at the Dickens House. The meetings in May and July were well attended, and many interesting items were exchanged or sold, knotty points were discussed and elucidated, and the present small group were more than ever convinced that this side of the Fellowship's activity was not by any means the least interesting and instructive.

FRIENDS OF THE DICKENS HOUSE (see page 262). Are you sending an Annual Subscription ?

THE OFFENDING RAZOR

A CONTEMPORARY'S CASTIGATION OF DICKENS

By Rev. L. B. CHOLMONDELEY

WHAT accounted for the almost instantaneous popularity Dickens had won amongst his countrymen, was that he had drawn out the humour latent in the everyday life of the men and women going on around them. Few could have supposed that clerks and journeymen, for instance, stable-boys and chambermaids, could have any interest for them—yet suddenly, Dickens had flashed his generous light on this everyday world, and it had begun to teem with interest. His wonderful portrayals of human nature had appealed to the humorous sense of his readers; there had been a powerful quickening, too, of their sympathies, and it was for this perhaps that England owes its truest gratitude to Dickens.

But while the popularity he had won for himself was amazing, it was inevitable, too, that he should have shocked a considerable number of the highly respectable people of his day. In the large class of those who then, as now, were sensitive about refinement—the "fight shy'ers" of vulgarity; the pious dowagers and elderly spinsters—there were many who had gravely shaken their heads at him. So, not unnaturally, proprietors and editors of "highly respectable" journals, that they might not forfeit the esteem of their subscribers, had severely brought this rash young writer to task for his alleged outrages on good taste, his ill-bred levities and his pandering to popularity.

It has lately been my fortune to light on one such journal,. It is entitled the "Literary and Pictorial Repository," and bears the date July, 1838. That was the year of the publication of *Nicholas Nickleby*, and over the initials S. H., duly appears a review of that work "now creating such a sensation among the reading public." But, before turning to this, his latest work, the reviewer first indulges in some general remarks about the author. "We cannot deny," he writes, "that he exhibits great accuracy and extraordinary humour, but yet in our very humble opinion, he is equalled, if not surpassed by Mr. Douglas Jerrold, who does not indulge in those vulgar trickeries and buffooneries, which run through every page of Mr. Dickens's comic writings—a fault exceedingly discreditable to an author of his talent." Our reviewer, we see, may be safely trusted to do his duty and not to spare the rod; and, in proceeding to his criticisms of *Nicholas Nickleby*, he quotes to start with, two examples of the author's buffoonery: (1) His crediting poor Newman Noggs with the trick of cracking the joints of his fingers; and (2) His describing the sparrow perched upon a tree in the yard, at the back of the moneylender's office, as a "rheumatic sparrow." For some reason or other, this "rheumatic sparrow" irritates him greatly. "No doubt," he writes, "Mr. Dickens thinks it very funny. But if it makes people laugh at all—and we must confess it did not excite *our* risibility—the laugh will be at him and not with him; in the same way that we should

laugh at a clown in a pantomime, who makes himself ridiculous by some extraordinary display of buffoonery. There is not the least spark of truth in such a description, and the author has no right, for the sake of the laughter of the vulgar, to invest an object with any peculiarity diametrically opposite to its real nature. But as we have said before, he abounds in these buffooneries, and we hasten to enumerate others." I omit this further enumeration, for I am hastening on myself, to the important problem of what I have entitled the "offending razor."

This offending razor is no other than the razor included in the requirements that a new boy was expected to bring with him to Dotheboys Hall.

"'Each boy,' says the Yorkshire schoolmaster, to that worthy stepfather, Mr. Snawley, 'is required to bring, Sir, two suits of clothes six shirts, six pairs of stockings, two night-caps, two pocket handkerchiefs, two pairs of shoes, two hats, *and a razor!*' 'A razor!' exclaimed Mr. Snawley, 'What for?' 'To shave with,' exclaimed Mr. Squeers, in a slow measured tone. There was not much in these three words, but there must have been something in the manner in which they were said, to attract attention, for the schoolmaster looked steadily at his companion for a few seconds, and they then exchanged a very meaning smile."

Now all this is too much for our reviewer. He cannot help thinking that the introduction of a razor into the list was "originally a blunder of the author's, afterwards attempted to be corrected, by the explanation given." But if it means anything at all, he is driven to the conclusion that it can mean nothing less than this, "that the schoolmaster is ready to put an end to the lives of his scholars, whenever required so to do." Our reviewer shudders; and we are really sorry for him—for he reminds himself and his readers, that the author is sketching a character in real life, and is here gravely insinuating that putting an end to the lives of his boys, is a common practice of this Yorkshire schoolmaster, who requires every new boy to bring a razor with him. There is, to him, only one escape from this terrible inference. "Perhaps we are wrong," he exclaims, "and Mr. Dickens may have intended it as a piece of facetiousness. What *does* he mean? It must either be intended seriously, sarcastically or facetiously. If the two first, it is most outrageous—a sort of serious caricature! If the latter, we cannot at all admire his taste in making such a subject one of buffoonery; ay! *buffoonery*, for there is neither wit nor legitimate humour in it, and we think the author would have done better, had he abstained from introducing razors in his list of school requisites."

While we may be trusted to-day to take true measure of this hardy censurer of Dickens, we should be making a mistake probably, if we imagined it would have been better for his reputation, had he kept silence; for, in spite of the slowness of intelligence he displays and his pitiful lack of humour, he was no doubt gauging rightly the temper and taste of the class of people, for whom he was writing. The readers of the "Literary and Pictorial Repository" no doubt, hailed with

approbation, this warm and timely protest against the buffooneries and vulgarities of a young author, fast rising in popular esteem; and no doubt S.H. was given cause to flatter himself, that by his review he had rendered a public service and enhanced his fame as a critic.

But I have not yet finished. For I feel that on our part there must be no cowardly shirking of the razor. What to us is the true explanation of it? I turned to a lady well versed in Dickens, and put to her the riddle. Nor was her answer long in coming: "I imagined it was meant," she said, "to give assurance to those who entrusted their boys to the care of Mr. Squeers, that they need be in no fear of their premature return, because provision had already been made against the day when they would be old enough to shave!" This solution does not seem to have occurred to the mind of S.H.; but the lady was probably right.

THE DICKENS SEAT IN THE NATIONAL THEATRE

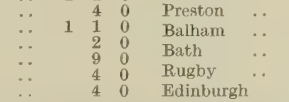
The final list of donations is given below. In accordance with our appeal, the surplus has been handed over to the Dickens House account.

In sending the official receipt for the cheque for £100, the Secretary of the National Theatre writes, "On behalf of my Committee, may I express to you their very sincere and grateful thanks for your generous gift, and say how much they appreciate the sympathy with, and the interest in, the National Theatre movement of which you have given such practical proof."

	£	s.	d.
In memory of Mr. William Miles per Mrs. Brumfitt	3	3	0
Mrs. Brumfitt	2	2	0
Mr. A. W. Edwards		5	0
Miss A. W. Miller		5	0
Mr. Byrne		5	0
Mr. G. Osmond		4	0
Sir Arthur Holbrook	1	0	0
Miss E. A. Wright		2	6
Miss Vautier		2	6
Miss J. Reckitt	5	5	0
Miss H. H. Spalding	1	1	0
Mrs. G. E. B. V. Wood		4	0
Mr. and Mrs. Rushton	1	1	0
Mrs. Edwards		2	0
Mrs. Prentice		9	0
Miss Linneker		4	0
Miss McShane		4	0

BRANCH CONTRIBUTIONS:

	£	s.	d.
Eastbourne	1	1	0
East Bay	1	0	0
Palos Verdes	1	4	6
Shrewsbury	1	1	0
Copenhagen		10	6
Cheltenham	1	1	0
Whitstable	1	7	0
Blackpool	1	1	0
Brisbane	1	1	0
Preston	1	10	0
Balham	1	3	6
Bath	1	1	0
Rugby		15	0
Edinburgh	1	1	0



LOYAL DICKENSIANS SALUTE THEIR KING AND QUEEN

THIS is the title of the chief feature of the opening meeting of the Winnipeg Branch, on October 12th, when the new President, Mr. D. R. P. Coats will be introduced by Mr. H. Gerald Wade, the Life President. It is a cinematograph record of the visit of their Majesties made—partly in colour—by members of the branch; their various efforts have been pooled, with, we understand, excellent results.

THE DICKENS

Dr. INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

EXPENDITURE.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
To Rent (including Insurance, Lighting and Heating), and Rates		86 0 0	
,, Printing and Stationery		33 16 2	
,, Salaries	331 5 0		
Less Contributed by "The Dickens House"	139 2 6		
		192 2 6	
,, General Expenses and Postage	68 9 1		
Less Amount charged to *The Dickensian* ..	73 0 5		
	minus	4 11 4	
			307 7 4
,, *The Dickensian* supplied to Headquarters' Members ..		91 10 0	
,, *The Dickensian* supplied to Branch Secretaries		11 11 0	
			103 1 0
,, Meetings		..	25 1 10
,, Charitable and Philanthropic Expenditure—			
Donation to Cot Fund		15 15 0	
Sundry Donations, Toys, and Christmas Entertainments Account		21 16 11	
Essay Competition Prizes		3 9 6	
			41 1 5
,, Depreciation—			
Library, Pictures and Furniture		..	6 16 3
			£483 7 10

BALANCE SHEET

LIABILITIES.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Sundry Creditors	.. ..	44 15 0
The Dickensian Current Account	.. ..	141 4 3
Life Membership Fund—		
As at 31st December, 1937	320 5 0	
Subscriptions received during the period	10 10 0	
		330 15 0
Special Reserve Fund—		
As at 31st December, 1937	.. ..	758 7 6
Advertising Fund—		
As at 31st December, 1937	.. ..	75 2 10
Costume Department—		
Excess of Income over Expenditure to date	.. ..	160 16 9
Dramatic Section—		
Excess of Income over Expenditure to date	.. ..	2 12 1
National Theatre Fund—		
Amount received to date	.. ..	1 1 0
Income and Expenditure Account—		
Balance at 31st December, 1937	109 16 3	
Less Excess of Expenditure over Income for the year	10 15 9	
Ditto *The Dickensian*	27 5 0	
	38 0 9	
		71 15 6
		£1586 9 11

We have examined the above Balance Sheet with the Books and Vouchers of th
verified the investments.
4b Frederick's Place, Old Jewry, London, E.C.2.

FELLOWSHIP

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1938. Cr.

INCOME.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
By Subscriptions—		
Headquarters' Members	285 18 11	
Branches	120 1 3	
Interest on Investment of Life Membership Fund (*less* Tax)	9 15 10	
		415 16 0
,, Interest on Loan to Dickens House (Gross)		10 0 0
,, Receipts for Charity—		
Sundry Donations	11 4 0	
Interest on 4% Consols (Gross)	4 14 6	
		15 18 6
,, Excess of Receipts over Payments in respect of Special Functions		21 18 1
,, Badges Account. Excess of Receipts over payments to date, transferred to Revenue		7 5 0
,, Tyrrell Collection—Reproduction and Copyright Fees		1 14 6
,, Balance, being excess of Expenditure over Income carried to Balance Sheet		10 15 9
		£483 7 10

AS AT 31ST DECEMBER, 1938.

ASSETS.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Life Membership Fund Investment at cost—		
As at 31st December, 1937, £327 4s. 10d. 4% Consols	320 5 0	
Transfer of Investment as at 31st December, 1937, £4 13s. 6d. 4% Consols	5 5 0	
(Market Value 31st December, 1938, £347.)		325 10 0
Investment of Special Donation, at cost—		
As at 31st December, 1937, £118 5s. 10d. 4% Consols		105 0 0
(Market Value 31st December, 1938, £124.)		
Library, Pictures and Furniture (including items loaned to Dickens House, Museum and Library)—		
As at 31st December, 1937	68 2 10	
Less Depreciation at 10%	6 16 3	
		61 6 7
The Tyrrell Collection of Photographic Negatives, at cost		75 0 0
Dickens House—		
Loan Account	550 0 0	
Add Interest accrued thereon	10 0 0	
	560 0 0	
Contribution Account	63 12 6	
		623 12 6
Costume Department—		
Cash at Bank and in Hand		160 16 9
Dramatic Section—		
Cash in Hand		2 12 1
Cash at Bank and in Hand		232 12 0
		£1586 9 11

Dickens Fellowship and certify the same to be in accordance therewith. We have also
(*Signed*) WHINNEY, SMITH & WHINNEY, Chartered Accountants,
4th April, 1939. *Hon. Auditors.*

OUR MUTUAL FRIENDS

Mr. Leo Mason, Hon. Secretary of the Blackburn Branch, has been elected Chairman of the Council of the Dickens Fellowship.

* * * * *

Mr. R. C. D. Shuckburgh, a great-grandson of Dickens, has been co-opted a member of the Executive Committee in London, and elected a member of the Council.

* * * * *

Monsieur André Maurois, of the French Academy, is the second Frenchman to be elected a Vice-President of the Fellowship.

* * * * *

Mr. Henry Charles Dickens, a grandson of Dickens, has been elected a Vice-President of the Fellowship.

* * * * *

The Earl of Lytton and Mr. Norman Birkett, K.C., have also been elected Vice-Presidents.

* * * * *

Past Presidents of the Vancouver and Toronto branches respectively, His Honour Judge F. W. Howay, LL.D., and Mr. James W. McFadden, K.C., have also been elected Vice-Presidents.

* * * * *

Miss Margaret Harkness, a member of the New York Branch, has just completed a term of one year as a guest teacher at the Royal School for the Deaf at Margate ; this school is the successor of the one in the Old Kent Road, London, to which Doctor Marigold took his Sophy.

* * * * *

Mr. D. R. P. Coats, the new President of the Winnipeg Branch, is the manager of Public Relations, Radio Branch, of the Manitoba Telephone System. He is a native of Gravesend, Kent. His great uncle was R. A. Proctor, the astronomer, one of the first to attempt a solution of the famous *Drood* mystery.

* * * * *

Mr. J. K. Thompson of Philadelphia, the doyen among branch secretaries, recently underwent a severe operation for appendicitis which occasioned three weeks in hospital. He reports himself out-and-about again, and we sincerely trust his recovery will be speedy and complete.

* * * * *

Mr. F. W. C. Hersey of Harvard University is again spending his vacation in Europe, making a much longer stay in England than is customary with him, which is all to the advantage of his many friends here.

* * * * *

Mrs. Margaret Brumfitt of Leamington has sent the Dickens Fellowship a donation of three guineas, "in memory of the late Mr. William Miles . . . he has left a fragrant memory, one which I shall always cherish." The cheque has been placed in the National Theatre account, as the best possible way of enshrining it in memory.

* * * * *

The Dickens House. Are you a Friend ? See page 262.

HOW WE RUN OUR BRANCH

(1) NOTTINGHAM.

In reading this article please do not assume that Nottingham thinks her way of running the Branch is better than others. Far from it. But as I suggested to your Editor that a series of articles on the above subject from different branches might be advantageous, I was forthwith commanded to "nail my colours to the mast." So, as Trotty Veck said, "Here we are and here we go!"

We will start first with £ *s. d.* Not, perhaps the most important aspect but very useful anyway. Our subscription is 6/6 per session, no entrance fee. The 6/6 includes *The Dickensian*. For a second or third member of the family it is 5/- without a further copy of *The Dickensian*. We have only just become what is known as an "inclusive" branch, but after careful consideration we are so convinced that it is conducive to the welfare of every branch that each member should have *The Dickensian* magazine, and also to the financial advantage of the Dickens House itself (a most potent argument) that we have taken the above step.

This subscription is sufficient to run the branch on good social lines; it pays items such as rent of rooms, printing, postage, stationery, and other incidentals, leaving a reasonable amount to give to worthy charities. Special efforts, such as Social Evenings, Dinners, Whist Drives, Plays, and the like, are financed from their own resources.

We cannot maintain this policy on a lower subscription, and how some branches run successfully on their very low subscriptions is a puzzle to me. It seems a mistake to fix the subscription too low, for to make the Fellowship successful in these days it must offer attractions in competition with other societies. We find it necessary to have a really comfortable room as a first asset and an attractive programme for the second. Since we adopted the above policy our membership has increased by leaps and bounds.

The main items of our programme are some 12 to 15 readings per session. The book chosen is divided so as to ensure practically the whole of the text being read on these evenings. A different leader is chosen for each evening, who invites his or her own readers to help with the different characters. The idea is to make the readings as dramatic as possible, and in this way a large number of members are actively engaged in the programme. At the end of the readings we may have papers given on the book by various members, which forms another evening's entertainment. I must not forget to say that we indulge in light refreshments during an interval in the reading. This gives an opportunity for chat and fraternizing. Sometimes everybody is talking at once, and windows have to be opened to let out the noise, but it is all very jolly!

We hold at least one Social Evening and celebrate Dickens's Birthday with a supper and fancy dress ball. A whist drive is occasionally undertaken, and nearly always a lecture by a local member or a member from another branch.

For our children's party (poor children) we are fortunate in having a hall equipped with a cinema, which we can hire at a trifling cost, and this party is a great delight, not only to the children, but quite as much to the helpers who run it.

The production of plays or sketches is a help, especially in keeping

together the young people. I know it means a big effort to produce a play with special scenery, and scenery to me seems almost a necessity if the right atmosphere is to be obtained (though it is not absolutely vital). Here is an opportunity to call for help from members who may be specially talented in various ways. There are so many ways in play production where, too, people with no special gift for acting can be of great help. By our plays we add considerably to our gifts to charitable institutions, and definitely increase the interest of our young members in the Fellowship, for we confine ourselves strictly to plays or sketches from Dickens.

During the summer we keep in touch by means of Garden Parties, at which members pay only " out-of-pocket " expenses, the gardens being placed at our disposal by generous members who have the accommodation. Sometimes we organise an " outing." This year we hope to go to the Dickens House, and see other Dickensian associations in London.

J. Cooper Sands.

(2) VANCOUVER.

Vancouver, B.C., branch of the Dickens Fellowship has been in existence for nineteen years, and like most other organisations of this nature, it has had its ups and downs. We are up against a thousand other counter-attractions (not more so than any other city of this size), but in spite of them we are able, every September, to issue our press notices and say, like Squeers, " Boys I am back from London, as strong and as well as ever." Faint cheers, if any, from the populace, but loud and resounding ones from the faithful membership.

We have a membership of approximately 90 and an average monthly attendance of 120. Up to last year our membership fee was $1.25. On the appeal from Headquarters, the executive council decided to make the membership fee $2.00, which would include a copy of *The Dickensian*. This matter was placed before a general meeting and carried unanimously. Prior to that only a few scattered copies of the quarterly were sold, and we have since found that a wise move was made in adopting this policy. Many of our members have said that a new light has been shed on Dickens for them since they have had *The Dickensian* to read and digest. Where there are two or three members of a family belonging to the Fellowship, only one pays the $2.00 fee, the others $1.25, unless they wish to have their own copy.

We would strongly advocate every branch adopting this policy, not only as a means of obtaining a sound Dickensian education, but as real help towards the work of Headquarters.

We hold eight meetings a year, from September to April, with the annual dinner always on a Saturday, on the date nearest to February 7th. We always secure an outstanding speaker and our dinner attendance usually runs about a hundred. Last February the night turned out to be a very bad snowstorm ; the executive groaned and thought if fifty were present they would be doing well. Our surprise was that 172 turned out for dinner.

It is interesting to note that for next year we have already secured as a speaker the famous Dr. F. W. Norwood of City Temple fame. This was due to our energetic secretary, Mr. Victor Ackroyd, who never missed a bet yet if it had to do with Dickens.

We usually have about six speakers during a session, but try to

vary our programmes as much as possible. For the 1939-40 session we intend opening with Dickensian sketches by two groups of players, feeling this to be a good drawing card for possible new members. Apart from our regular meetings we usually have one evening for a whist drive to raise a little extra money. The Christmas meeting is devoted to the Tiny Tim fund. We have a grab bag to which all contribute two or three gifts and these are sold out at ten cents each. The money is used for the purpose of sending poor children to seaside camps.

We have an energetic and growing section of younger Dickensians who hold their own meetings (this was founded by Mr. Thomas M. Luckett, a past president) and our reading circles grew so big they were divided into two and named the Pickwick and Micawber circles, respectively. It should be mentioned that each member has a name-badge, which he or she wears at the meetings. In this way we soon get acquainted and we have ten minutes recess for general social intercourse.

Just so long as we can keep our Dickens on the "mankleshelf and put him to our eyes whenever we feel so dispoged," we shall continue to go on, and, we hope, prosper.

ERNEST WALTER,
President.

(3) MANCHESTER.

THE Manchester Branch was founded in January, 1903. It may therefore be taken that whatever teething troubles it suffered in those early days it has long outgrown that stage, also that in its long life it has learned a great deal for the benefit of its members, and a number of leading activities have profited by constant repetition and have grown from very small beginnings into functions of great importance. This is particularly noticeable in the case of the Birthday Celebration, which takes the form of a dramatisation in aid of charity of one or other of Dickens's works. In 1940 it is hoped to give the twenty-first annual celebration.

The actual management of the Branch is in the control of the Council, with three principal officers consisting of the President or the Chairman of the Council, the Secretary, and the Treasurer. The activities of these officers are supplemented by the appointment of people specially qualified to undertake certain branches of the work. It is therefore possible to conduct, simultaneously, varying activities without placing too heavy duties on one pair of shoulders. For instance, the Assistant Secretary is concerned with the control of the very large audiences attending the Birthday Celebrations; another officer is concerned with the organisation of those members who are willing to give their personal services to charitable institutions (the principal work of this department at present is to provide assistance in the staffing of the local Voluntary Library Service in the Hospital).

Financial assistance to charities consists of the annual selection of one deserving charity to whose credit is placed the whole of the proceeds of all charitable efforts in that year. Birthday Celebration performances provide the bulk of this revenue, which, since its inception, has produced approximately £1,600.

In our meetings we carry out Fellowship spirit by inviting other organisations to visit us and give a joint programme. By this method

we have entertained, in the last three years, the Manchester Eloc tionists' Association, Manchester Literary Club, and the Lancashi Authors' Association. We have found that such meetings have re only been of great interest, but to the advantage of both sides. Retu invitations have been received and accepted.

The same principle is applied in the interchange of visits betwee branches and members in the North-West Regional Group.

There is considerable demand from literary and other societies i the city and surrounding districts for speakers on Dickens, an number of members qualified in this direction are always availabl Upwards of fifty engagements of this nature are kept each winter.

The proceedings include social events, namely the Annual Dinner i November, a Dingley Dell Party held in January, Garden Party (o other reunion) in the summer, all of which are supplemented by frequ unofficial meetings around various domestic firesides.

HARRY E. EVANS,
Hon. Secretary.

[EDITORIAL NOTE.—Contributions are invited for inclusion in th series.]

UNIQUE ITEMS IN THE SALE ROOMS

At the Parke-Bernet Galleries, New York, April :

Manuscript, *The Song of the Wreck*, 3 pp., 1855, $800.

Manuscript, *On an Amateur Beat, New Commercial Sampl* 9 pp., 1869, $1,650.

Presentation Copy, *American Notes*, 2 vols. First Edition, 184 inscribed " Mr. Serjeant Talfourd From his friend Charles Dickens $250.

Autographed Copy, *Pictures from Italy*. First Edition, 184 inscribed, " Charles Dickens wishes he had given this book Mrs. Costello and considers himself a brute for not having done Broadstairs, Eighteenth August 1847," $430.

At Sotheby & Co., London, July :

Manuscript, *The Life of Our Lord*, 46 pp., 1846, £1,400.

MR. F. J. HANSOR

WE regret to record the death, at the age of 81, of Mr. F. J. Hans the President of the Eastbourne Branch, who was esteemed by a ve wide circle of Dickensians as a genial and courteous gentleman a indefatigable worker. He was one of the founders of the Bright Branch and on moving to Eastbourne, founded the branch with whi his name has for so long been so closely associated. We extend c deepest sympathy to his widow and daughter.

ERRATUM.—In the last number of *The Dickensian*, page 209, n lines from bottom; for "Sweeper" read "Sweyn."

DIARY OF DICKENS FELLOWSHIP MEETINGS

ADELAIDE.
Sept. —Lecture on *David Copperfield* by Rev. Tilbrook.
Oct. —Lecture on Dickens by Mr. Adey.
Nov. —" Dickens and Religion " by Mr. H. W. Tiley, followed by a Dickens Knowledge Bee, arranged by Mrs. Brock.

AUCKLAND.
Sept. 7—Sketches in Character, by Mrs. H. Griffiths.
21—Readings from *Nicholas Nickleby*, directed by Dr. C. H. Tewsley.
Oct. 5—Readings from *Nicholas Nickleby*, directed by Miss M. Robinson.
19—" Dickensiana," by Mr. J. W. Kealy.
Nov. 2—Readings, directed by Mr. G. S. Bullen.
16—Readings, directed by Mr. S. W. Brandon.
30—Annual Dinner.

BLACKBURN.
Oct. 13—Lecture on *The Old Curiosity Shop*, by Mr. T. Holden.
27—" Dickens; Humorist and Humanist," by Mr. W. A. Millington.
Nov. 10—Visit of the Preston Branch.
24—Short papers by Miss M. Fell, Miss C. A. Smith, Mrs. Hamm.

BRISBANE (2nd Floor, National Mutual Building, Queen Street).
Sept. 1—" Newspapers in the days of Dickens," by Mr. Colin Bingham.
15—Presentation of Essay Prizes.
Oct. 6—Lecture by Miss Merna I. Gillies, A.C.T.L., L.A.B.
14—Annual Picnic.
20—Book Evening.
Nov. 3—Dramatic evening, arranged by Miss Clare Clarke.
17—Annual Meeting. Presidential address by Dr. Hamlyn Harris, D.Sc., Sc.D.

BROMLEY.
Sept. 23—Pilgrimage to Rochester.
Oct. 11—Whist Drive.
Nov. 15—" On Edwin Drood " by Mr. Percy T. Carden.

CHRISTCHURCH.
Sept. 2—Study Groups, *Nicholas Nickleby*, Chapters 27-39.
Oct. 7—Study Groups, *Nicholas Nickleby*, Chapters 40-52.
Nov. 4—Study Groups, *Nicholas Nickleby*, Chapters 53-65.
Dec. 2—Three-minute readings by members, from *Nicholas Nickleby*.

EDINBURGH.
Oct. 19—" The Philosophy of Mr. Pickwick," by Mr. W. Christie Cowan, B.L.
Nov. 2—" Czechoslovakia and Poland," by Mr. Harold Skelton.
16—Resumé of *The Old Curiosity Shop*, by Mr. W. O'Brien.
17—Discussion at Heriot Watt College, " Dickens and Women," by W. A. Adams Cairns.
30—" Dickens and the School," by Mr. J. Hamilton Birrell, M.A., Ph.D.

HACKNEY AND STOKE NEWINGTON.
Oct. 11—Presidential Address, and " Dickens In Town To-night."
28—Dinner at Leicester Corner Restaurant.
Nov. 15—" All the Year Round with Dickens " by J. H. McNulty.

LEYTON.
Sept. 29—" Dickens All the Year Round " by J. H. McNulty.
Oct. 25—A Dickensian Retrospect, by Mrs. Anne Watley, B.Sc., F.R.G.S.
Nov. 29—A Musical Evening, arranged by Mrs. Miller.

LONDON (Sion College, Victoria Embankment).
Oct. 10—Presidential Reception.
31—Whist Drive.
Nov. 18—Afternoon Ramble conducted by Mr. G. F. Young.
23—" Dickens's Influence on the Modern Novel," by Miss Marjorie Bowen.

NEW YORK.
Oct. 20—Review of *The Old Curiosity Shop*, by Mr. Frank Harvey Field.
Nov. 17—To be announced.

PHILADELPHIA.
Oct. 25—Papers on *Sketches by Boz*.
Nov. 22—Short plays from *Sketches by Boz*.

ST. PANCRAS.
Sept. 9—Ramble to Barnet.
30—Group 6 Meeting. Visit to Guildhall Art Gallery.
Oct. 14—Visit to Messrs. Twining & Co., Strand.
Nov. 25—Visit to Record Office.
27—" Palestine and Syria," by Mr. Stuart Bunning.

SYDNEY.
Sept. 22—" Dickens and the Law," by Mr. N. L. Cowper, B.A., LL.B.
Oct. 27—Discussion, Dickens's Men *v.* Women, by Mrs. Norman Bladen and Mr L. E. Gill.
Nov. 24—" Dickens and Thackeray ; a Comparison," by Dr. A. H. Martin, M.A.

VANCOUVER.
Sept. 28—Sketches from *David Copperfield*, by the Dickens Players.
Oct. 26—Lecture by His Honour Judge J. A. Florin.
Nov. 23—Special contributions by members, directed by Miss Dorothy A. Monro.

DICKENSIANA OF THE QUARTER

" Dickens and Daughter," by Gladys Storey. Illustrated, 10/6 Frederick Muller Ltd.

" Books and I," by Paul Lemperley. Rowfant Club, Clevelanc U.S.A.

" The Colophon," March, 1939, $4. Pynson Printers Inc., New York

" Doctors, Nurses and Dickens " and " Lawyers of Dickens and thei Clerks," by Robert D. Neeley, $1.50 and $1.25, respectively Christopher Publishing Co., Boston, Mass.

NEWSPAPER AND MAGAZINE ARTICLES

" Charles Smithson, the friend of Dickens," by Walter Smithso Rowntree, B.Sc. " The Friends Quarterly Examiner," April.

" The Religion of Dickens," by Alfred Noyes. " The Tablet, May 20th.

" The Beadle of the Universe," by D. L. A. " Birmingham Post, May 23rd.

" Dickens and Bath," by Anthony Clyne. " Birmingham Post, May 25th.

" Dickens and Westminster Abbey," " The Times " (Leader June 12th.

" The Status of Dickens to-day," by Robert Hamilton. "Yorkshir Post," June 12th.

" Bleak House," by E. J. Raynor. " The Catholic Pharmacist, April.

" The Dickens House," illustrated. " Nursing Notes," June.

" Charles Dickens in Cork," by F. S. Cornwall. " Cork Examiner, July 1st.

" Dickens and Alderbury " (Letter from F. C. Henderson), " Salisbur Journal," June 30th.

" News of Barnard's Inn," by The Londoner. " Evening News, July 25th.

" Charles Dickens and the Church," by W. K. Lowther Clark " Theology." August.

" Dickens and *Edwin Drood*." " Yorkshire Post." August 14th.

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